# SERMONS,

PREACHED IN LONDON,

AT THE FORMATION OF THE

# MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

SEPTEMBER 22, 23, 24, 1795:

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED,

## *MEMORIALS*

RESPECTING THE ESTABLISHMENT AND FIRST ATTEMPTS OF THAT SOCIETY.

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ISAIAH xlviii. 3.—I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I shewed them, I did them suddenly, and they came to pass.

——— xlii. 18, 19.—Hear ye deaf, and look ye blind, that ye may see.—Who is blind but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I sent? who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the Lord's servant?

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BY ORDER OF THE DIRECTORS.

PUBLISHED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE SOCIETY.

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AN

# INTRODUCTORY MEMORIAL

## RESPECTING THE FORMATION

OF THE

# MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

*Publiſhed by the Directors.*

"ACCORDING to this time, it ſhall be ſaid of "Jacob, and of Iſrael, What hath God "wrought?" The ſurpriſing ſucceſs which, at this moment, ſeems to crown our endeavours, while it comforts our hearts, calls us to the ſolemn recollection of our perſonal unworthineſs and inſignificancy. To the ſelf-evident excellency and grandeur of the cauſe muſt it be aſcribed, and to the interpoſition of *the God of the ſpirits of all fleſh* to whom the ſalvation of human beings is dear, that ſuch a multitude of miniſters and private Chriſtians have ſo affectionately united to form the Miſſionary Society.

It will be gratifying to thoſe who now feel a tender intereſt in this deſign, and perhaps to many in the ages which are about to roll on, to be directed to the *firſt publication* which ſtood in immediate connection with the riſe of this ſociety. This was an Addreſs to Profeſſors of the Goſpel, by the Rev. Mr. Bogue, of Goſport; publiſhed in the Evangelical Magazine, for September 1794; whereof a copy here follows:

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

GOD has favoured us with the knowledge of the way of ſalvation through a crucified Redeemer. Our obligations to him on this account are inexpreſſible; and, I truſt, we are often prompted

from the fullneſs of our hearts to aſk, *What ſhall we render unto the Lord for all his benefits?* If in many things we are anxious to make a ſuitable return, there is one thing with reſpect to which, if weighed in the balance of the ſanctuary, we ſhall be found wanting. A ſurvey of the ſtate of the world preſents to us more than one-half of the human race deſtitute of the knowledge of the Goſpel, and ſitting in darkneſs and in the ſhadow of death. Their deplorable condition it is utterly impoſſible for words to deſcribe! And what have we done for their ſalvation? There are hundreds of millions of poor Pagans ignorant of the true God, and falling down before ſtocks and ſtones. There are hundreds of millions more blinded by the deluſions of Mahomet; and unacquainted with Jeſus, as the only mediator between God and man, whom to know is eternal life. If we have never thought of theſe things, there is much reaſon to lament our criminal unconcern for the honour of God, and for the ſalvation of the periſhing ſouls of men. If they have been the ſubject of our ſerious conſideration; with ſuch a ſcene before our eyes, what methods have we employed that all theſe myriads of Pagans and Mahometans might be delivered from the power of darkneſs, and tranſlated into the kingdom of God's dear Son?

While we are forced to acknowledge that we have as a body done nothing, we may juſtly reflect we are under the ſtrongeſt obligations to do every thing in our power. We all know that it is the ſupreme end of our exiſtence to glorify God. But can we ſuppoſe that though we endeavour *perſonally* to live to his honour, our obligations are fulfilled, while we have employed no methods *as a Chriſtian body* to lead our brethren in Pagan lands to glorify him alſo, by making them acquainted with his nature, government, and grace? We profeſs "to love the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in ſincerity:" But are we not bound thereby "to ſhed abroad the ſweet odour of his name in every place," till it be diffuſed throughout all the dark paths of the earth, the habitations of ignorance and cruelty? We are commanded "to love our neighbour as ourſelves;" and Chriſt has taught us that *every* man is our neighbour. But do we diſplay this love while we allow groſs darkneſs to cover the Pagan and Mahometan nations, and are at no pains to ſend to them the glad tidings of ſalvation through the ſufferings and death of the Son of God? Perhaps we have not conſidered our duty reſulting from that command which was directed from the ſupreme authority to every follower of the Lamb: *Go ye into all the world, and preach the Goſpel to every creature:* That has not yet been done. It ought to be done without delay; and every Chriſtian is called upon to act his part, and cannot without criminality withhold his exertions towards procuring obedience to the command of his Redeemer and his Lord. *Gratitude* calls loudly to us to be active inſtruments in the hands of Chriſt, in proclaiming to the moſt diſtant parts of the earth that grace of which we hope we have ourſelves been made partakers. *Juſtice* too unites her ſtrong and imperious voice, and cries, "Ye were once Pagans, living

in

in cruel and abominable idolatry. The ſervants of Jeſus came from other lands, and preached his Goſpel among you. Hence your knowledge of ſalvation. And ought not ye, as an equitable compenſation for their kindneſs, to ſend meſſengers to the nations which are in like condition with yourſelves of old, to entreat them that they turn from their dumb idols to ſerve the living God, and to wait for his Son from heaven? Verily their debtors ye are."

But it may be aſked, "Why are we in particular called on to exert ourſelves in this work? Will it ſatisfy you if I anſwer, that I am one of you, and think myſelf on this account obliged to ſpeak more immediately to you? A connection with a ſociety or denomination of Chriſtians ſhould certainly influence us to ſeek the welfare of that ſociety, and authoriſes us to invite its members to diſcharge the duties incumbent on them. Beſides, all other bodies of profeſſing Chriſtians have done, and are doing, ſomething for the converſion of the Heathen. The labours of the church of Rome have been far more abundant than thoſe of all other ſects whatever. O that they had but conveyed Chriſtianity *pure* to the blinded Pagans! The Church of England has a Society of conſiderable ſtanding, for the propagation of the Goſpel. The Kirk of Scotland ſupports a ſimilar inſtitution. The Moravian Brethren have, if we conſider their numbers and their ſubſtance, excelled in this reſpect the whole Chriſtian world. Of late the Methodiſts have exerted themſelves with a moſt commendable zeal. An aſſociation is juſt formed by the Baptiſts for this benevolent purpoſe; and their firſt Miſſionaries have already entered on the work. *We alone* are idle. There is not a body of Chriſtians in the country, except ourſelves, but have put their hand to the plough. We alone (and it muſt be ſpoken to our ſhame) have not ſent meſſengers to the Heathen to proclaim the riches of redeeming love. It is ſurely full time that we had begun. We are able. Our number is great. The wealth of many thouſands of individuals is conſiderable. I am confident that very many among us are willing, nay deſirous, to ſee ſuch a work ſet on foot, and will contribute liberally of their ſubſtance for its ſupport. Nothing is wanting but for ſome perſons to ſtand forward, and to begin.

We have the greateſt encouragement, Brethren, to engage in this work of love. The ſacred Scripture is full of promiſes, that the knowledge of Chriſt ſhall cover the earth, as the waters cover the channel of the ſea; and every promiſe is a call and a motive to enter on the ſervice without delay. It is the cauſe of God, and will prevail. Should we even fail in the attempt, we ſhall not loſe our labour; for though the Heathen ſhould not be gathered by our means, "yet we ſhall be glorious in the eyes of our God." But we have no reaſon to expect ſuch an iſſue. For all who are engaged have met with ſuch ſucceſs, as to animate others to unite their vigorous endeavours. In no one place have pious and perſevering Miſſionaries laboured in vain.

Some

Some perhaps may aſk, what can we do? We are willing to aſſiſt; but how can our aſſiſtance avail? Need I ſay, Brethren, that our duty is to uſe the means of divine appointment? In every age of the Church, the propagation of the Goſpel has been by the preaching of the miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt. By the ſame method are we to propagate the Goſpel now. It is highly probable that ſome zealous men would preſent themſelves, who are well qualified to go immediately on a miſſion among the Heathen. But in general they will require ſome previous inſtruction; and therefore it will be neceſſary to found a *Seminary* for training up perſons for the work. An able and eminently pious miniſter in a central ſituation muſt be ſought for to ſuperintend it. And as the education of a Miſſionary muſt be in many reſpects widely different from that of thoſe who preach in Chriſtian countries, it may be expected that every man of talents will unite his endeavours to render the plan of inſtruction as well adapted to anſwer the end in view, and in every reſpect as complete as poſſible. For the ſupport of the ſeminary, and of the miſſionaries, funds muſt be provided. And I do not think I am too ſanguine in my expectations when I ſay I am fully perſuaded, that in every congregation among us annual ſubſcribers will be found, and an annual collection granted; and that the produce of theſe, aided by occaſional donations, and by legacies from the lovers of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, will be ſufficient for maintaining at leaſt twenty or *thirty* Miſſionaries among the Heathen. What pleaſing and glorious effects may reſult from their labours, it is impoſſible for the human mind to calculate.

With objects before us ſo grand, and proſpects ſo delightful, I conjure you, Brethren, to exert yourſelves in the cauſe of your Redeemer, and of periſhing ſouls. An inſulated individual, and not having an opportunity of conſulting with others, I take this method of recommending the ſubject to your ſerious attention. Think of it in your moſt pious moments. Let it be matter of prayer before God; and make it the topic of your converſation one with another. As it is the duty of paſtors of the Church "to be forward to every good work," I call upon the miniſters of the metropolis to conſult together on this important ſubject, and without loſs of time to propoſe ſome plan for the accompliſhment of this moſt deſirable end; that "our Lord Jeſus Chriſt may have "the Heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the "earth for his poſſeſſion."

*26th Auguſt* 1794.

This addreſs gave occaſion to various private converſations; at length, on the memorable 4th of November 1794, the firſt concerted meeting with a view to this ſociety took place. It was a ſmall, but glowing and harmonious, circle of miniſters of various connections and denominations. From that time,

time, then appeared a gradual increaſe of cordial friends to the periſhing heathen, though many reſpectable characters whoſe early patronage of this cauſe was deſired, yielded to cautious heſitation, and ſome were perhaps diſpoſed to attach preſumption to the undertaking.

Early in the month of January 1795, the Brethren who felt increaſing ardour of zeal in this cauſe, reſolved to try the diſpoſition, and to call in the aid of Evangelical Miniſters in London, and appointed the following printed Addreſs (which was about the ſame time publiſhed in the Evangelical Magazine) to be ſent to a conſiderable number of Miniſters in the metropolis and its neighbourhood, accompanied with a written Letter. The Addreſs and Letter are here ſubjoined.

An Addreſs to Chriſtian Miniſters, and all other Friends of Chriſtianity, on the Subject of Miſſions to the Heathen.

DEAR BRETHREN,

THE Addreſs which appeared in the Evangelical Magazine of laſt September, on the ſubject of ſending Miſſionaries to preach the Goſpel among Pagan nations, ſeems to have awakened conſiderable attention. Many acknowledge the deſirableneſs of the object; ſome lament, with tears, its having been ſo long neglected, and numbers only wait with anxiety for an opportunity of exerting themſelves in ſo glorious a cauſe.

That ſomething may be done *with effect*, it is hoped that not only Evangelical *Diſſenters* and *Methodiſts* will be found generally diſpoſed to unite in inſtituting a Society for this expreſs purpoſe, but that many *Members of the Eſtabliſhed Church*, of Evangelical ſentiments; and of lively zeal for the cauſe of Chriſt, will alſo favour us with their kind co-operation. Indeed, the increaſe of union and friendly intercourſe, among Chriſtians of different denominations, at home, is one of the happy effects which will immediately flow from an inſtitution of this nature.

In order to the organization of ſuch a Society, it has been propoſed that a *General Meeting of Miniſters* ſhould be held in London, early in the enſuing ſummer. In the mean while, that ſuch a Meeting may be brought forward with advantage, it is warmly wiſhed that Miniſters and others, who favour the deſign, would immediately begin to *exert* themſelves in their particular ſpheres.

It may be aſked, *What can be done?*—In anſwer to this proper inquiry, the following *hints* are humbly ſuggeſted:—

Let

Let each individual, who is affectionately zealous in the cauſe, take every proper opportunity, by converſation and by letter, to endeavour to communicate the ſame ſacred fire to others. Let him try to impreſs his friends, not only with the general importance of this buſineſs, but with the idea of its being practicable and expedient, in concurrence with others, to do ſomething in it *now*. And where the force of argument ſeems to take effect, let him farther endeavour to perſuade his friends to come forward with pecuniary ſupport. By all the methods which a prudent zeal can ſuggeſt, let him make up as large a liſt, as poſſible, of reſpectable names and ſubſcriptions. Proceeding in this manner, it is impoſſible to ſay what extenſive ſucceſs may ſoon follow the exertions even of a few individuals. To ſuch as ſhall ſubſcribe, it may not be amiſs to hint the impropriety of diminiſhing their former liberality to other religious inſtitutions, in order to extend it to this new undertaking. The Lord does not approve of "Robbery for burnt offer-"ing." What is given, ſhould either be ſaved from ſome article of unneceſſary expenditure, or taken from what would otherwiſe be laid up in ſtore.

By ſuch efforts as theſe, a Chriſtian may engage the ſupport of his friends in behalf of this important enterpriſe; but let it never be forgotten, that it belongeth to "Him who hath the key of "David, who openeth and no man ſhutteth, to open a great and "effectual door" for the propagation of his Goſpel. To Him, therefore, let every eye be directed! The great mean of obtaining his bleſſing on our benevolent exertions, is *Prayer*. Perhaps God's putting it in our hearts to engage in this excellent deſign, is an anſwer to the prayers of many of his people, for a ſeries of ages. Let us then take encouragement to ſtir up ourſelves, and others in our ſeveral connexions, to *extraordinary prayer*, for the pouring out of the Spirit from on high, to direct and proſper this great attempt! For this purpoſe, the laudable example of our Brethren in Warwickſhire is worthy of general notice; who have ſet apart the firſt Monday of every month, at ſeven o'clock in the evening, as a ſeaſon of *United Prayer*, for the ſucceſs of ſuch attempts to ſpread the Goſpel through the world. "Ye that make mention "of the Lord, keep not ſilence; give him no reſt till he eſtabliſh "and make Jeruſalem a praiſe in the earth."

Already has Divine Providence begun to ſmile on this infant deſign. In the Evangelical Magazine for November, one gentleman promiſes 100l. to the Society as ſoon as it is eſtabliſhed; and 500l. more are promiſed by another gentleman for the equipment of the firſt ſix Miſſionaries to the South Sea Iſlands. The warmeſt gratitude is due to theſe two generous friends of the Chriſtian intereſt in Heathen lands, and their animating example is worthy of being held up to general imitation. Though a Thornton is gone, we rejoice to think, that the lively efficient zeal of that great Chriſtian philanthropiſt is not extinct, but warms the breaſts of others, and prompts them to the ſame noble and ſtrenuous exertions.

But the ardour of our joy is ſomewhat damped by the oppoſite conſideration, that, even among ſerious and opulent profeſſors of religion, *ſome* are to be found of a timid, cold, contracted ſpirit; who loſe all their zeal in a falſe prudential delicacy; and who are ever crying out, "A lion is in the way," when any benevolent ſcheme is projected, ſo arduous and extenſive as this before us!—With ſuch an object in view, obſtacles and oppoſition are to be expected; but what difficulty preſents itſelf in this caſe, which by ſovereign grace heretofore has not been, and may ſtill be, ſurmounted? Even the temper of the times, which ſome would inſinuate as unfavourable to our views, is, however ſpacious, no valid objection. That divine oracle is a ſufficient reply, "He that obſerveth the winds will not ſow." Beſides, the faithful page of hiſtory tells us, that times of the moſt gloomy and unpromiſing aſpect have, by the wiſdom and power of the great Head of the Church, "rather tended to the furtherance of the Goſpel." Was it not in the reigns of Tiberius, Caligula, and Nero, that "ſo mightily grew the word of the Lord, and prevailed?"

What remains then, but that (laying aſide all excuſes) we put our hand to the work with vigour and ſpeed. Perhaps, ſome wiſh to wait till they ſee their ſeniors go before them; but this is a falſe modeſty. Procraſtination argues a torpid indifference. To be "*forward* to every good work," ranks high both as a miniſterial and Chriſtian virtue. A few ſucceſſive moments will terminate our preſent life; and with it, all opportunities of "ſerving the will of God in our generation," or of "ſeeking the profit of many, that they may be ſaved." Every argument that recommends the object at all, tends alſo to ſtimulate to inſtant exertion. The glory of God—the conſtraining influence of redeeming love—the deplorable condition of countleſs millions, who never heard of the great ſalvation, and "are ready to periſh for lack of knowledge"—our awful reſponſibility for the uſe we make of the privileges and talents entruſted to us—and finally, the exalted honour and felicity awaiting thoſe who "ſhall have turned many to righteouſneſs"—are powerful incentives to ſpeed and diligence in this noble deſign.

It is pleaſing to anticipate the wide-extended happiness of Heathens, when converted to Chriſt, and brought "to know the joyful ſound;" an anticipation, which, by the ſmiles of Heaven upon our endeavours, we may, by and by, ſee partly realized. As yet, it is only matter of prayer and contemplation—but if many hands ſet early to the work, who knows but before we ourſelves are numbered with the dead, we may have cauſe to adopt that gratulatory, triumphant ſong of the Apoſtle—"Now, thanks be to God, who always cauſeth us to triumph in Chriſt, and by us maketh manifeſt the ſavour of his knowledge, in every place."

Yet a little while, and the latter-day glory ſhall ſhine forth with a reviving ſplendour, when, according to the predictions of the infallible word, "the knowledge of the Lord ſhall cover the earth, as the waters cover the ſea: His name ſhall endure for ever: His

name ſhall be continued as long as the ſun: Men ſhall be bleſſed in him; and all nations ſhall call him bleſſed."—Amen!

*December* 1, 1794. Your's, &c.

REV. SIR,

BY appointment of ſeveral Miniſters who have repeatedly met together, with a ſerious deſign of forwarding the great object which the prefixed printed Addreſs recommends, I take the liberty to acquaint you, that another meeting for the ſame purpoſe is propoſed to be held on Thurſday the 15th inſt. at 11 o'clock preciſely. The place of meeting is the Caſtle and Falcon Inn, Alderſgate-ſtreet. It is alſo intended that the hour immediately before, viz. from 10 to 11, ſhall be employed in prayer at the ſame place.

We realize the cry of miſery and deſtruction in deſtroying lands, where millions are periſhing in the blood, gall and wormood, of a Chriſt-leſs ſtate, and are haſtening to eternity in guilt, pollution, and darkneſs. We liſten, with ſolemn regard, to the *voice of Infinite Grace*, which promiſes and commands, the publication of the everlaſting Goſpel, to every creature under heaven; and we earneſtly deſire to uſe ſome ſtrong exertions, that, if it pleaſes our God, we may be, in ſome degree, inſtrumental to fulfil his merciful purpoſes reſpecting Heathen Countries.

Truſting that your ſentiments of zeal and compaſſion are congenial with ours, we ſolicit, in the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, your kind co-operations by your council, influence, and prayers, and requeſt, that you will favour us with your preſence at the time of prayer and conſultation above mentioned.

I am, Rev. Sir, with great reſpect,
Your moſt obedient humble Servant,
In Goſpel bonds,

*Jan.* 9, 1795. JOHN LOVE.

This epiſtolary communication diſcovered the affectionate willingneſs of a conſiderable number, to ſtand forth in this work. At the time ſpecified they met together, and began jointly to call on God in reference to the ſalvation of the Heathen, mingling their applications with the reading of ſuitable portions of the bleſſed word of God, and afterwards conſulting together on the beſt expedients for the formation of a regular Society. It was unanimouſly determined, that all party names and inferior diſtinctions ſhould, in the proſecution of this vaſt deſign, be abſorbed in the great Chriſtian name and cauſe. And theſe Meetings held regularly once a

fortnight, with much ſacred pleaſure and unanimity were reſorted to, with a gradual increaſe of numbers, of zeal, hope, and delight.

*The following ſhort form of Aſſociation was early formed, and appears in the Minute Book, with the Subſcription of the Names undermentioned.*

"WE whoſe names are here ſubſcribed, declare our earneſt deſire to exert ourſelves for promoting the great work of introducing the Goſpel and its ordinances, to Heathen and other unenlightened countries, and unite together, purpoſing to uſe our beſt endeavours, that we may bring forward the formation of an extenſive and regularly organized Society, to conſiſt of Evangelical Miniſters and Lay Brethren of all denominations, the object of which Society ſhall be to concert and purſue, the moſt effectual meaſures for accompliſhing this important and glorious deſign.

Alexander Eaſton,
John Love,
Joſeph Brookſbank,
Edward Edwards,
J. A. Knight,
John Knight,
W. T. Platt,
Joſeph Radford,
William Roby,
James Steven,
John Towers,
Mattew Wilks,
T. Williams,
John Eyre,
James Knight,
George Jerment,
Jonathan Scott,
John Reynolds,
Samuel Greatheed,
William Moore,
William Love,
Robert Simpſon,
John Townſend,
Alexander Waugh,
James Weſton,
George Townſend,
Henry Hatley,
T. Haweis,
Thomas Beck,
William Graham,
Andrew Duncanſon,
Thomas Beſt,
T. Prieſtley.

A Committee of correſpondence being immediately appointed, a correſpondence was opened with brethren in all parts of the country; and it ſoon appeared manifeſt, that the flame of heavenly zeal which had for a long time been ſecretly and in many places, already kindled, was now burning. There was no need to ſuggeſt new ideas on this ſubject; the ſpirit of the Lord had happily anticipated our endeavours, enlarging the hearts of miniſters and their people, towards the unknown inhabitants of diſtant lands.

It may gratify the friends of the Inſtitution to peruſe the following copy of the firſt circular letter, ſent to Miniſters in the country.

*Jan.* 27, 1795.

Reverend and Dear Sir,

AMIDST the deſolating ſtrife of mortals, God has often "appeared in his glory" to extend the kingdom of his dear Son. This remark, in the preſent æra, is ſuited to afford peculiar conſolation. And the recent "ſhaking of nations" has led not a few pious minds to anticipate thoſe glorious days, when "the "knowledge of the Lord ſhall cover the whole earth."

Many Chriſtians, both clergy and laity, have long pitied the deplorable blindneſs of Heathen countries, and have wiſhed to do more than commiſerate the unnumbered millions of their fellow men, who are "periſhing for lack of knowledge." Some have written, with conſiderable energy, on the nature and expediency of miſſions to thoſe remote inhabitants of the earth, and our baptiſt brethren have ſent two perſons to the Eaſt-Indies, where they meet with flattering encouragement.

Several meetings have lately been held in London, by evangelical miniſters of various denominations, who cordially unite in this intereſting ſubject. On Thurſday the 15th of this month, a reſpectable body of miniſters met at the Caſtle and Falcon Inn, Alderſgate-ſtreet, and appointed a committee of correſpondence, for the purpoſe of collecting the ſentiments of their reverend brethren in the country, relative to this affair.

We, the underſigned, being choſen to act as the ſaid committee, are induced to make this application to you, by the ſentiments we entertain of your piety, zeal, prudence, and compaſſion for periſhing ſouls. We hope that your perſonal experience of the bitterneſs of a ſinful ſtate, and of the love, power, and riches of Jeſus the redeemer, and your official employments in labouring to ſave immortal ſouls, will open your heart to the enlarged concern for millions ready to periſh in "the dark places of the earth;" and prepare you to echo to the ſounding of the bowels of Chriſtian compaſſion towards them, from this favoured, though unworthy, country. We truſt to find in you, not only a well-affected generous individual, but one whoſe active exertions will ſtir up and collect the ſcattered embers of holy zeal in the neighbourhood around you. Without, therefore, entering into long reaſoning in ſupport of our arduous attempt, we will briefly explain the ſervice, which, in the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, we call you to undertake.

The object before us is of ſuch magnitude, as to require the combined wiſdom and exertions of many Goſpel miniſters, and ſocieties. It is therefore in contemplation, to bring forward, early in the enſuing ſummer, a general meeting of miniſters and laybrethren, delegated from all parts of the country, at London, or ſome other central ſituation; their buſineſs when convened, will be

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to plan and organize a ſociety, for carrying theſe great deſigns into immediate effect. It is neceſſary, in the mean while, that ſome prudent and active individuals be at pains to collect information, reſpecting the number and abilities of miniſters and congregations, who may be willing to afford their countenance to this undertaking. Such inquiries we wiſh you to make in the county where Providence has placed you, and to uſe all other endeavours for promoting this cauſe, which you may judge expedient.

We requeſt your immediate anſwer, intimating your conſent to engage in this ſervice, together with your opinion, what is likely to be effected in your neighbourhood; and will be ready on our part to forward to you every information, and to anſwer any queſtions you or your brethren may propoſe. The Warwickſhire aſſociation have unanimouſly reſolved to concur in the deſign, and have ſuggeſted the expediency of a ſhort ſpirited addreſs to be ſent to miniſters, to be diſtributed gratis among their friends.

Hoping that the Lord will incline and direct you to do his will in this buſineſs, and wiſhing that his truth and work may proſper in your part of the country, and particularly under *your* miniſterial labours.

We are, with the greateſt reſpect,
Rev. Sir,
Yours, in the fellowſhip of the Goſpel.
(Signed)

Jos. Brooksbank,
Joh. Eyre,
Joh. Love,
Will. F. Platt,
Joh. Reynolds,
Will. Smith,
Jas. Stephen,
Alex. Waugh,
Mat. Wilks.

P. S. Your anſwer may be addreſſed to the Rev. John Love, Queens' Row, Hoxton. We wiſh to unite with approved evangelical miniſters, reſpectable in their moral conduct, and with all ſects of every denomination.

To this letter, ſuch anſwers were received from different parts of the country, as afforded the greateſt encouragement. One reverend brother begins thus: "Your kind letter I look upon as an anſwer "from above. It has long been my wiſh, my "prayer, and my hope alſo, that God would ſend "forth his light and truth among the poor Heathen. "To promote this cauſe. I will plead, preach, and "ſpare no exertion."—Another thus: "We have "all done too little for the ſouls of men, and the "honour of our great Maſter. We have bleſſed "ourſelves in the poſſeſſion of Goſpel privileges, "and almoſt forgotten our fellow men, in other

"parts

" parts of the world; ſunk in ſin, and periſhing in " horrible darkneſs. Verily, we have ſinned in this " matter. May we be forgiven; and may we do ſo " no more! Let us all riſe up to the work of God, " and he will bleſs the labour of our hands."—And a third, with all the unſophiſticated ſimplicity and warmth of a Chriſtian, writes thus: " Immediately " on hearing *the good news*, I called the members " of our little church together, to pray for a bleſſing " on it. All rejoiced in the proſpect of ſeeing many " come from the Eaſt and Weſt, the North and " South, to ſit down in the kingdom of their com- " mon Father. And all ſignified their readineſs to " put their mite into your treaſury. If it be but " little, I am ſure you will have their hearts, and, I " hope, God's bleſſing with it."

From theſe few ſpecimens, the reader may form an idea of the ſpirit, which breathes in many letters received on this occaſion.

About this time, the committee circulated through the country, the following ſhort addreſs to the people, written by the Rev. Mr. Burder, of Coventry, which, though it is already in the hands of many of our friends, deſerves to be tranſmitted to poſterity in this volume.

*An Addreſs to the ſerious and zealous Profeſſors of the Goſpel, of every denomination, reſpecting an attempt to evangelize the Heathen.*

IT is now almoſt eighteen hundred years ſince the Friend of Sinners left our world, and left it with this gracious charge to his diſciples—" Go ye forth, and teach *all nations*:" At the ſame time he aſſured them, that, thus employed, they ſhould, in all ages, and in all places, enjoy his preſence.

Thus commiſſioned and encouraged, the willing diſciples gladly obeyed their Maſter's laſt command, and found his promiſe verified. For when, full of the Holy Ghoſt, they proclaimed ſalvation to *Jeruſalem ſinners*, thouſands were pierced to the heart with a ſenſe of ſin, and cordially welcomed the bleſſings of the Goſpel. A glorious church was quickly formed, and additions were continually made to it " of ſuch as ſhould be ſaved."—" So mightily " grew the word of God, and prevailed." And when, diſperſed by perſecution, they " went every where preaching the word," glorious indeed was the progreſs of truth, triumphant over all the oppoſition

oppoſition of earth and hell. In the courſe of about 300 years, notwithſtanding every poſſible obſtacle was thrown in the way, great parts of Europe, Aſia, and Africa, were evangelized. A dark cloud indeed afterwards covered the earth. Firſt, Arianiſm, and then Mahometaniſm ruined the Eaſt; and Popery, by the introduction of dangerous doctrines and ſuperſtitious rites, tarniſhed the glory of Chriſtianity in the Weſt. A long and awful night ſucceeded. At length the day-ſpring from on high reviſited the earth. The apoſtolic ſpirit revived in the glorious Reformers. A part of Chriſtendom regained, and has, in a meaſure, ever ſince preſerved the light and power of ſacred truth.

But it is aſtoniſhing and lamentable to reflect, how few and feeble the efforts of Chriſtians, ſince that period, have been, to evangelize the Pagan part of the world. Some indeed have been valiant in preaching the Goſpel at home. Others have done worthily by their excellent writings, in contending for primitive doctrine againſt internal enemies. But oh! where is the primitive zeal? Where are the heroes of the church—men who would willingly ſpend and be ſpent for Chriſt; who have the ambition not to tread in a line made ready for them, but to preach Chriſt, where, before, he was not named? Men who count not their lives dear, ſo that they might win ſouls to Chriſt?

We ought indeed to admire that peculiar providence which inclined a number of conſcientious and perſecuted Proteſtants to quit their native iſland, and to venture on the barren ſhores of America, where they not only eſtabliſhed Goſpel churches among themſelves, but planted others among the native Indians*.

But oh! what a melancholy proportion of the inhabitants of the globe ſtill remain in the ſhadow of death! It has been computed, that 481 millions are abſolute Pagans, deſtitute of the knowledge of the true God, and of Jeſus Chriſt, whom he hath ſent.

During the laſt 50 years there has been a great revival of true religion among ourſelves. Many thouſands of Britons have been brought to the knowledge of redemption. Jeſus has become precious to multitudes, who were blind Phariſees or atrocious ſinners. Much laudable zeal has been diſcovered by miniſters and private Chriſtians, in their endeavours to ſpread the Goſpel in their reſpective neighbourhoods; and many a town, and many a village, can boaſt ſome new edifice, in which the free grace of Jeſus is proclaimed, and his worthy praiſe reſounded. Conſcious, alſo, that hitherto their efforts have been enfeebled for want of union, ſocieties of Chriſtians begin, in ſeveral parts of the kingdom, to

* In 1632, Mr. Elliot, called by ſome The Apoſtle of the Indians, began to preach among them with great ſucceſs. Several churches were planted, and ſome preachers and ſchool-maſters raiſed up among them. About 1743, Mr. David Brainerd went among them, and, amidſt inexpreſſible difficulties, was owned to the converſion of a great number. Mr. Kirkland, and others, have lately been bleſſed with conſiderable ſucceſs.

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aſſociate in a regular manner, and, in limited diſtricts, to form new plans of uſefulneſs, and to eſtabliſh funds for the more effectual promotion of vital godlineſs.

Among the generous deſigns of lively Chriſtians, we rejoice to hear that more than a few, unacquainted with each others wiſhes, have, in different places, expreſſed moſt vehement deſires to do ſomething for the poor Heathen; and without any preſent ſpecific plan of co-operation in view, have actually begun to lay by a little money, that they may be ready to contribute to ſo glorious a work, as ſoon as ever Providence may favour them with an opportunity.

Modern diſcoveries in geography have perhaps contributed to enlarge the deſires of Chriſtians in this reſpect. Captain Cook and others have traverſed the globe, almoſt from pole to pole, and have preſented to us, as it were a new world, a world of iſlands in the vaſt Pacific Ocean—ſome of them as promiſing in the diſpoſition of the people, as in the appearance of the country. May we not reaſonably hope that a well-planned and well-conducted miſſion to one or more of theſe, ſeconded with the earneſt prayers of thouſands of Britiſh Chriſtians, will be attended with the bleſſing of God, and iſſue in the converſion of many ſouls?

Enterpriſes of this kind, ſupported by the Danes, the Moravians, the ſociety in Scotland, and many others, have had ſome ſucceſs*: Although ſome of them have been conducted on plans, which experience has now taught us were very imperfect. The late attempt of our Chriſtian brethren of the Baptiſt denomination, ſo highly honourable to their active zeal and true philanthropy, is already ſaid to wear a promiſing aſpect. Thus much at leaſt we may infer, that when a benevolent ſcheme of this ſort is adopted, neither money is withheld nor miſſionaries denied. Oh that we may ſoon hear of multitudes of Hindoos flying to Chriſt as doves to their windows, and uniting together in praiſing the Lamb!

May we not indulge a hope that the happy period is approaching, when the Redeemer ſhall take unto him his great power and reign? "He *muſt* increaſe. His name *ſhall* be great." And is there not a general apprehenſion, that the Lord is about to produce ſome great event? Already have we witneſſed the moſt aſtoniſhing tranſactions; and is it not probable that the great Diſpoſer of all is

* In 1706, the King of Denmark ſent Miſſionaries to Tranquebar, on the Coromandel Coaſt, in the Eaſt Indies. The Dutch opened a Church in the city of Batavia, in 1621; and from hence, miniſters were ſent to Amboyna. At Leyden, miniſters and aſſiſtants were educated for the purpoſe of Miſſions under the famous Walæus, and ſent into the Eaſt, where thouſands embraced the Chriſtian religion at Formoſa, Columba, Java, Malabar, &c.; and though the work declined in ſome places, yet there are ſtill churches in Ceylon, Sumatra, Amboyna, &c. &c.

But the *Unitas Fratrum*, or Moravians, have excelled all their competitors. Their calm, ſteady, perſevering zeal, has done wonders in Greenland; and ſet the reſt of the Chriſtian world an example worthy their imitation, and affording great encouragement.

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now about, by ſhaking terribly the nations, to eſtabliſh that ſpiritual and extenſive kingdom which cannot be ſhaken? Let us then, utterly and ſincerely diſclaiming all political views and party deſigns; abhorring all attempts to diſturb order and government in this, or any other country; vigorouſly unite, in the fear of God, and in the love of Chriſt, to eſtabliſh a Miſſionary Society upon a large and liberal plan, for ſending miniſters of Chriſt, to preach the Goſpel among the Heathen.

Many thanks are due to ſome late writers on this important ſubject. About three years ago, Mr. Carey, of Leiceſter, publiſhed "*An Enquiry into the Obligations of Chriſtians, to uſe Means for the "Converſion of the Heathen; in which the religious State of the "different Nations of the World, the Succeſs of former Undertakings, "and the Practicability of further Undertakings—are conſidered.*" We beg leave to recommend the peruſal of this well meant pamphlet to our readers; and to remind them that it derives no ſmall addition of value from this conſideration, that the Author "has "given to his precepts the force of example," by becoming a miſſionary himſelf, and is now a preacher on the banks of the Ganges.

The Rev. Melvill Horne is alſo entitled to public thanks, for his "Letters on Miſſions; addreſſed to the Proteſtant Miniſters of the "Britiſh Churches." That gentleman has alſo been a volunteer in the ſervice; and was, for a time, Chaplain of Sierra Leone, in Africa; and though he declined the arduous taſk, for reaſons which he very candidly aſſigns, he has pleaded the cauſe of Miſſions in a manner more maſterly and ſpirited than any of his predeceſſors. He has ably detected the miſtakes which have too often occaſioned the miſcarriage, or ſmall ſucceſs, of former attempts; and, taught by painful experience, has pointed out a more excellent way. We ſincerely hope, that this bold and zealous production, will have the moſt beneficial effects, both in promoting and directing future Miſſions. We muſt refer to both of theſe publications for anſwers to thoſe objections which are ſo commonly ſtarted by *Laodicean profeſſors*. We muſt not dream of Miſſions deſtitute of difficulties; but theſe worthy men have ſhowed, and experience has abundantly proved, that the difficulties are not inſuperable. There is alſo every reaſon to believe that they may be leſſened, both in their number and degree. But were it otherwiſe, ought we not to bluſh at being deterred from the godlike attempt, by difficulties ſcarcely conſidered when fame or worldly gain is the object? The brave officers of the army and navy, hide not themſelves at home in inglorious eaſe and ſafety, when the dangers of their country call them to the camp or the ocean. Cook and other navigators have voluntarily expoſed their lives in unknown tracts, in fields of ice, and in the abodes of ſavages. Our merchants venture into the burning and frozen regions, and trade with men of every colour and clime, for uncertain riches. And are there not yet among us numbers of miniſters and pious youths, who would gladly fly to the ends of the earth, bearing with them the glad tidings of

ſalvation* ? Let us but make the trial, and it will aſſuredly be crowned with ſucceſs.

Dear brethren, let it be remembered, that Britain, Chriſtian Britain, was once an iſland of idolatrous Barbarians : and ſuch it had yet remained, unleſs ſome of God's dear people in diſtant countries—(Oh that we knew their names ! We *ſhall* know them in glory)—unleſs they had formed the benevolent plan of ſending Miſſionaries hither. Let us in return " go and do likewiſe." Look on the terreſtrial globe. Let Africa, Indoſtan, and China attract your notice. Behold the aſtoniſhing cluſters of the South Sea Iſlands. Let us meet for prayer and conſultation ; let us ſet on foot a liberal ſubſcription ; let us look out for preachers of an apoſtolic ſpirit ; let them, well provided for, depart in ſufficient numbers to ſtrengthen each others hands ; let them cultivate a friendly intercouſe with the natives, and by living among them in habits of friendſhip, adopt the moſt prudent means of leading them into a gradual acquaintance with the glorious truths of Revelation.

Surely ſuch an attempt as this will be acceptable to our God, whether it meets with all deſirable ſucceſs or not. It will manifeſt, at leaſt, that we love his name and prize his ſalvation ; and he will ſay to us as to David, " Thou didſt well that it was in thine heart." This, however, we are ſure of, that all endeavours to prevent the ſpread of the Goſpel are extremely provoking to him. St. Paul ſays, that the Jews " filled up the meaſure of their ſins by for- " bidding the Apoſtles to ſpeak to the Gentiles, that they might " be ſaved ; and thus the wrath of God came upon them to the " uttermoſt." 1 Theſſ. ii. 16. By parity of reaſon, we may juſtly conclude, that it is highly pleaſing to God, that they who have taſted that he is gracious, ſhould exert their utmoſt endeavours to convert others. If to preſent a cup of cold water in his name be an acceptable ſervice, ſurely it is a ſervice of a ſuperior nature to preſent the cup of ſalvation.

Let us do ſomething *immediately*. Life is ſhort. Let us " work, " while it is called to-day ;" the night of death approaches ; and our opportunities of being uſeful will cloſe for ever. " Whatſo- " ever then our hands find to do, let us do it with all our might," and that without delay.

To make an entrance on this great work, we beg leave to propoſe in the firſt place, that Goſpel-Miniſters will take the pains to ſtir up their reſpective auditories to a more cloſe and ſerious conſideration of the object in view, and to confer with them upon it.

* Mr. Horne informs us, in his Letters on Miſſions (p. 135), " that when, " at Bethlehem, in North America, letters were read in the Brethren's con- " gregation, ſtating that ſeveral of their miſſionaries had been carried off by " ſickneſs in the iſland of St. Thomas, in the Weſt Indies, *that very day* ſeven " Brethren offered to go and replace them.—This is juſt what things ought " to be, and any church which can produce ſuch men may engage in " Miſſions."

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We then wiſh that ſome eſtimate may be formed of what each ſociety may be able and ready to contribute annually, to a common fund, without injury to themſelves or to their miniſters. This done, we earneſtly deſire that a miniſter, or ſome other intelligent perſon, be deputed by the united congregations of each county or counties, to meet in London, as ſoon as poſſible in the courſe of the enſuing ſummer, there to confer in a ſolemn manner on this important affair; and, if the attempt be reſolved upon, to chooſe a committee, reſident in London, connected with correſponding committees in different parts of the country, to carry the plan that may then be adopted into execution, as ſoon as circumſtances will admit.

It now remained only to concentrate the flame of pious benevolence, and to form a plan of combined operation. With this view, the General Meeting was appointed, wherein the auſpicious commencement of the work hath, we preſume, in the view of generous and impartial obſervers, marked the finger of God.

*In the near approach of the General Meeting, the following circular Letter was extenſively diſperſed, among Miniſters in the City and Country.*

DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD,

YOU have moſt probably been made acquainted, that ſome of your fellow-labourers in the Goſpel of Chriſt, of different denominations, practiſing infant baptiſm, have united for the purpoſe of eſtabliſhing a Society to ſupport Miſſions in heathen and unenlightened Countries. The Committee, whoſe names are ſubſcribed to this Addreſs, compoſe a part of the number who have met, for ſeveral months paſt, in London, to ſeek the Lord's direction and bleſſing on this benevolent deſign. Though our plan is diſtinct from the undertakings of the Moravian Brethren, the Arminian Methodiſts, and the Churches who hold the neceſſity of adult immerſion; we are far from oppoſing or diſapproving their laudable endeavours: On the contrary, we applaud their zeal, and rejoice in their ſucceſs, accounting it our duty to imitate their truly primitive example. At the ſame time, it is our deſire to attempt an *improvement* of the plan on which they have proceeded, by an extenſion of its limits, both in the foundation and ſuperſtructure of the intended edifice. We therefore earneſtly invite all who hold the truth in love, to unite in exertions which may hereafter be found extenſively ſucceſsful.

Early in the preſent year we wrote to ſeveral Miniſters in the various counties of England, ſoliciting their co-operation, and requeſting them to make known our communications in their reſpective

tive vicinities and connexions. A ſmall printed addreſs has been alſo widely circulated. Through the medium of the Evangelical Magazine, the ſubject has been frequently recommended to general attention. The anſwers received, both from individual and aſſociated Miniſters, have been of a very encouraging nature. By theſe our expectations are exceedingly flattered, as they contain expreſſions of the moſt lively pleaſure, with which our Brethren concur in our deſign, and alſo aſſurances of their determination to afford us their moſt ſtrenuous ſupport. At length it has been reſolved, to hold a General Meeting in London, on the 22d, 23d, and 24th days of next September, for the purpoſe of forming a permanent Society, and deciding upon the beſt mode of carrying our wiſhes into full effect. In proſpect of this ſolemn aſſembly, we addreſs you, dear Brother, as one who, we truſt, feels no leſs intereſted than any of us, in the advancement of the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour. The ſucceſs of the attempt appears, under God, to be almoſt wholly with the Miniſters of Jeſus, and where *they* lead, their flocks will probably follow—what *they* have faith and love to undertake, the people will eaſily find means to execute. For our own parts, we do not imagine, that the zeal of Goſpel Miniſters will be found wanting, as they know and believe, that the kingdom of their Lord is already univerſal in point of *right*, and muſt hereafter become ſo in *fact*. We hope, dear Brother, that you in particular, honoured with the fellowſhip of this miniſtry, are ready to ſtand among the foremoſt in whatever way the Lord is pleaſed to call you. Deeming it inexcuſable to remain inactive, we have done, and, through grace, will continue to do what we can. We now apply to *you* for aſſiſtance—we put the cauſe into your hands—into your's, as much as any man's, truſting that it will not fail for want of your ſupport; and that if it ſhould ſtop ſhort of its great end, it will be as far beyond your ſtation, as your unwearied endeavours can advance it.

We requeſt you, dear Brother, to make the congregation, over which the Lord hath placed you, acquainted with our deſign, and to recommend it earneſtly to their ſerious, devotional, and practical regard. Improve every opportunity your ſituation affords of conferring with your neighbouring brethren, upon the beſt means of ſtrengthening our hands in this good work. Where congregations cannot depute their miniſter to aſſiſt at our deliberations, we earneſtly recommend, that ſuch as are aſſociated together will delegate, at leaſt, one of their number for that purpoſe; and others, no doubt, will help us by their interceſſions at the throne of grace.

After all, the chief difficulty will be to find proper Miſſionaries—men of God, full of faith, and of the Holy Ghoſt. We expect, however, to hear from many places, that the Lord has been ſtirring up the hearts of fit perſons to this glorious work. Permit us to aſk, Is there among your acquaintance any one deſirous to take advantage of the opportunity which, we truſt, will ſhortly be furniſhed, to become inſtrumental in conveying the glad tidings of redemption into the regions of the ſhadow of death? Your own judgment, and

that

that of your friends, as to the beſt manner of proceeding, in order to find ſuch inſtruments, will be highly acceptable.

If it pleaſes the great Lord of the harveſt to ſend forth many labourers into the wide-extended field of the Heathen world, conſiderable funds will be neceſſary, that the moſt diſtant climes may be viſited with the fulneſs of the bleſſing of the Goſpel of Chriſt. It is therefore deſirable to form ſome eſtimate of what can be done, in the various Chriſtian Societies that give attention to this call. If each congregation contributes ſomething, however ſmall the ability of many may be, the aggregate amount will be conſiderable. By the more affluent, a due regard, we hope, will be paid to the example of princely generoſity already given, by ſome who have ſet their ſhoulders to this ſublime work.

The time of the propoſed meeting ſpeedily approaches. What your hand finds to do, dear Brother, do it with all your might. Millions of immortal ſouls call upon us for the word of ſalvation. The honour of the holy and bleſſed Redeemer is bleeding in every climate, through the crimes of wicked men who aſſume the Chriſtian name. What ought to be our feelings and exertions! Shall we not hope that the age of cold indifference is paſt, and that the Spirit of Chriſt has kindled in our hearts an unextinguiſhable flame of love to God and man? May He guide and proſper all your labours of love among the people of your immediate charge, and ſmile upon whatever you undertake for the furtherance of this grand object.

Commending both it and you to his gracious patronage,

We remain,

Your affectionate Brethren and
Servants for Jeſus' ſake,

JOSEPH BROOKSBANK,
JOHN EYRE,
SAMUEL GREATHEED,
JOHN LOVE,
WILLIAM F. PLATT,
JOHN REYNOLDS,
WILLIAM SMITH,
JAMES STEVEN,
ALEXANDER WAUGH,
MATTHEW WILKS.

As the general concurrence in the formation of the Plan is an object much to be deſired, we ſhall be happy to ſee you among us: Hoping to derive pleaſure from your company, and aſſiſtance from your talents.

N. B. A conſultation of the friends of the inſtitution will be held, at the Caſtle and Falcon, Alderſgate-ſtreet, at ſix o'clock, on the Monday evening preceding the General Meeting, when your attendance will be particularly acceptable.

A ſhort letter of invitation likewiſe was ſent to many private Chriſtians, in the city and its environs.

The

The preparatory meeting of Monday evening, September 21, exhibited an agreeable prelude of the tranſactions of the ſubſequent days.

At the appointed place of meeting there appeared a very numerous and reſpectable aſſembly of miniſters and private Chriſtians, an aſſembly whoſe aſpect indicated ſerioufneſs, ardour, and harmony, worthy of ſo great an occaſion. Sir Egerton Leigh, Bart. was voted into the chair; and after prayer by Mr. Boden, of Hanley, Mr. Steven of Crown Court, in a conciſe and affectionate manner, related to the aſſembly the ſteps which had been previouſly taken, to bring the important buſineſs to the preſent ſtage.

Mr. Love of Artillery-Street, who had acted as ſecretary to the committee of Correſpondence, was then called on to read the letters from the country in his hands. After ſome remarks reſpecting the agency of the bleſſed Spirit of God, in uniting, and harmoniouſly animating, all his children, and bringing them to concur in important public exertions; a number of letters from miniſters in the country were read, which afforded evident ſatisfaction to all preſent, particularly the intimation from a gentleman at Glaſgow, that a number of praying-ſocieties in that city and neighbourhood had reſolved to devote themſelves, on the enſuing day, to prayer for the ſucceſs of this general meeting. It now appeared that a zealous union of ſpirit in favour of the attempt to enlighten the Heathen, prevailed not only in the aſſembly preſent, but among ſerious Chriſtians throughout the Iſland, from Eaſt to Weſt, from South to North.

The Rev. Mr. Haweis then, with much affection and energy, repreſented to the meeting the practicability of finding proper Miſſionaries, and read ſome very ſtriking letters from perſons who have generouſly offered themſelves to this arduous ſervice.

Then the meeting, by a unanimous lifting up of hands, declared their warm approbation of the deſign

deſign to eſtabliſh a ſociety, for ſending miſſionaries to Heathen and unenlightened countries.

An overpowering pleaſure attended in the breaſts of many, the paſſing of this important reſolution. The Rev. Mr. Eyre, when words almoſt interrupted with joy "found out their way," read the ſketch of a plan prepared by the Committee, which was approved as proper to be laid before the general meeting on the enſuing day. Subſcription books were then opened, and the thanks of the meeting were voted to the aſſociated and individual miniſters, who have favoured this deſign by their epiſtolary communications, or their preſence; to the gentlemen of the committee who brought forward the plan, and to the chairman, Sir Egerton Leigh, for his polite attention to the buſineſs of this evening.

The Rev. Mr. Rowland Hill concluded the whole with prayer, and the aſſembly broke up with a gladneſs which the combinations of ſenſuality, avarice, ambition, or party-zeal, cannot inſpire.

On Tueſday the 22d, and the two following days, there were ſucceſſively held, in various parts of the city, ſix ſolemn aſſemblies for worſhip. Something, we are ſenſible, is to be imputed to the charm of novelty. But, after making all reaſonable allowances of this kind, we appeal to every candid and intelligent Chriſtian, who attended on theſe occaſions, whether there did not appear tokens of a preſence, infinitely more auguſt, than that of a mere multitude of mortal ſinful beings. The animated ſolemnity, unity, and zeal of theſe great aſſemblies, the ſpirit with which they were enlivened to the laſt, and the ſolid effects in overflowing liberality, for the advancement of the work in view, make it apparent, that God himſelf hath been the primary author of theſe movements.

What kind of materials were preſented to the public mind, in theſe religious ſervices, appears in this publication; men of candour, we hope, will not pronounce, that the people were brought together to

feed on the eaſt-wind of empty declamation, or to be amuſed and cheated with the froth of unmeaning enthuſiaſm. The impartial reader will ſee with his own eyes, that the grand acknowledged doctrines and duties of Chriſtianity, have been fairly exhibited in their benign aſpect, towards the converſion of the Heathen, and the illumination of their dreary abodes.

In the intervals, between the more ſolemn ſervices; meetings were held for tranſacting the buſineſs, and bringing into form the affairs of the infant ſociety. In theſe meetings, amidſt the difficulties of an indigeſted ſtate of things, and the neceſſary ardour of candid and vigorous diſcuſſion, ſtill the ſpirit of ſerioufneſs, and harmonious benevolence predominated, ſubduing all into order and coalition. In theſe conferences, conſiderable attention was beſtowed on the following objects: viz. The diſcuſſion and ſettlement of the Plan of the Society, the nomination and choice of Directors, a Treaſurer, and Secretaries, and the determination of the places and manner in which the firſt attempts ought to be made.

At Spa-fields Chapel on Tueſday, in the preſence of a multitude of ſpectators, who tarried after the concluſion of the public worſhip, a numerous body of Miniſters and Lay-Brethren, in the area of the Chapel, formed themſelves into a Society; and choſe the Rev. Mr. Kingſbury of Southampton, to be Preſident of the Meeting.

After prayer, by the Chairman, Mr. Eyre introduced the reading of the Plan, which had been prepared for the conſideration of this Meeting, by a ſeries of hiſtorical obſervations, pointing out the analogy between the firſt propagation of the Goſpel, by the Apoſtles and others in the early ages, and the work now in view, of endeavouring to ſend the light of the Goſpel into Heathen countries, and explaining the manner in which Chriſtianity hath been, in later ages, introduced into ſome countries formerly Pagan, together with an account of Miſſionary attempts

ſince

ſince the period of the Reformation. He then read over the Plan. A Committee being choſen, immediately retired to conſider the Plan, and having made a few alterations, expreſſed their approbation of it, and returned it to the examination of the Meeting. The Plan was then read a ſecond time, conſidered, diſcuſſed, and, with ſome corrections, adopted, article by article.

On the following day, after the public ſervice, at Haberdaſher's Hall Meeting, the Rev. Dr. Hunter being voted into the chair, after prayer, a conſultation was held of the Miniſters, chiefly reſpecting the nomination of proper perſons, to be entruſted with the management of the affairs of the Society, as Directors. The Committee, choſen the preceding day, were required to withdraw into the veſtry, and to bring forward, a liſt of perſons whom they judged fit for this important office. Their nomination being produced, was approved, and the Gentlemen, whoſe names were in this liſt, were appointed to make ſuch additions to it, as they might ſee proper. The whole liſt thus completed, was publicly read at the concluſion of the ſervice in the Tabernacle.

On Thurſday the 24th, there was an early meeting of the Miniſters, at the veſtry of Surry Chapel, for the purpoſe of collecting the names of Miniſters, who have attended the formation of this Society, and of receiving the informations of gentlemen, delegated from congregations, or aſſociated bodies in the country. After the public worſhip, the Rev. Mr. Haweis, explained, in a very energetic and convincing manner, his views of the expediency of fixing on the iſlands in the South Sea, as the firſt and immediate object of Miſſionary endeavours. And the large aſſembly then preſent, ſeemed warmly, and joyfully, to harmonize with his ſentiments, on that ſubject.

The General Meeting was convened for the laſt time, on this occaſion, the afternoon of Friday, the 25th, at the Caſtle and Falcon, Alderſgate Street.

The Rev. Mr. Pearcy being in the chair, after prayer, the Meeting proceeded to the choice of a Treaſurer, Mr. Joſeph Hardcaſtle was immediately nominated; when the Rev. Mr. Greatheed, ſtated Mr. Hardcaſtle's objections to this office; theſe objections were over-ruled, and Mr. Hardcaſtle was elected, with the greateſt unanimity.

The Meeting then proceeded to the election of 25 Directors? the liſt of gentlemen nominated by the Committee being read, they were requeſted to withdraw, and by a diſtinct vote on each name, the following gentlemen were unanimouſly choſen; the Rev. Meſſrs. Boden, Bogue, Brookſbank, Burder, Eyre, Greatheed, Haweis, Hey, Hill, Lambert, Sir Egerton Leigh, Love, Mends, Parſons, Platt, Reynolds, Steven, Waugh, Wilkes, and Meſſrs. Foyſter, Neal, Stokes, Weſt, John Wilſon, Thomas Wilſon. To this liſt, were added, with the unanimous approbation of the Meeting, the following gentlemen, nominated by thoſe now choſen, the Rev. Meſſrs. Saltern and Audley, and Meſſrs. Alday, Campbel, R. Cowie, R. Steven, Taylor.

Some difficulties occurred in the election of a Secretary, on account of the great diverſity of abilities, requiſite to the advantageous fulfilment of the complex, and various duties, which might be preſumed to belong to that office, in a Society of this peculiar nature. Theſe difficulties were afterwards adjuſted by the Directors, at their firſt Meeting, to whom this buſineſs was referred; two Secretaries being choſen, the Rev. Mr. Love, who of courſe vacated the office of Director, and Mr. Shrubſole, to each of whom, diſtinct departments were aſſigned.

The attention of the Meeting being directed to the conſideration of the places of the earth, which ſhould engage their firſt exertions: It was unanimouſly reſolved, that the firſt attempt of this Society, ſhall be to ſend Miſſionaries to Otaheite, or ſome other of the iſlands of the South Sea; and alſo, that Miſſions may be, as early as poſſible, attempted to

the Coaſt of Africa, or to Tartary, by Aſtracan, or to Surat, on the Malabar Coaſt, or to Bengal, or the Coromandel Coaſt, or to the Iſland of Sumatra, or to the Pelew Iſlands. And it was reſolved, that if the Directors can prepare a Miſſion before the time of the next General Meeting, in May, 1796, they are empowered to expend on it ſuch a ſum, as may be neceſſary.

After various reſolutions of a leſs important nature, the minute enumeration of which might be tedious, the whole buſineſs of this firſt General Formatory Meeting, of the Miſſionary Society, was concluded, as it had been begun, with prayer, unanimity, and joy.

Soon after the General Meeting was diſſolved, the conſtituted Body of Directors began its operations. After many ſerious conſultations, by much attention and labour, the buſineſs of the Directors is brought into a regular train, their various Committees are diſtinctly arranged, and the highly important and intereſting work of examining candidates for the Miſſionary warfare, is now actually commenced.

Looking back to this ſingular epoch, we cannot avoid expreſſing our ſenſe, of the condeſcenſion and tender mercy of our God, who hath benignly ſmiled on this riſing inſtitution. To Him, the unfeigned gratitude and praiſes of many are, we hope, on this account frequently aſcending, like clouds of fragrant and acceptable incenſe.

Let not, however, the appearance of ſucceſs and proſperity, in this arduous undertaking, ſeduce our vain hearts into carnal confidence, ſecurity, and preſumption. Let us rejoice with trembling." "Let "not him that girdeth on his harneſs boaſt as he "that putteth it off." The great difficulties of the warfare have not yet been encountered. In vain do men flow in crowds to the places of worſhip, in vain "is gold laviſhed out of the bag, in vain do ſongs "and ſhouts of triumph ſhake the ſtarry vault," if there are not in ſecret places thoſe agonizing wreſtlings

lings of faith and compaſſionate ſupplication, which bear ſome proportion to the magnificent object, the converſion of Heathen nations. To theſe deep-felt, unoſtentatious, and truly Chriſtian exerciſes, apply yourſelves, with your utmoſt might, ye children of the living God, ye friends of Zion, *ye who love Jeruſalem, and mourn for her.*

May we not allude to thoſe words of our Lord, "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and faſting." When fit meſſengers are found, great and mighty muſt be the operation of grace in their ſouls, raiſing them to ſuch degrees of knowledge, courage, and ſpiritual energy, as hitherto we have ſeldom witneſſed. For this end, your humble united cries muſt pierce the heavens, and, rendered efficacious by the blood of the everlaſting covenant, bring down from on high, the Lord God of Elijah, Jeſus the Lamb of God, the Spirit of Jeſus, and of the apoſtles and witneſſes of the Lamb. You muſt bear your miſſionaries on the wings of your faith and love, through thoſe vaſt waters and unknown dangers which are between them, and the objects of their concern and exertion. And when they are ſet down in the midſt of crouds of ungodly, Chriſtleſs ſavages, will you forget them? Will you ſlightly regard their work? Will you contemplate the ſolemn ſpectacle with dry eyes? "Bear "witneſs againſt us, ye bleſſed benevolent angels "who rejoice in the repentance of a ſinner, *let all* "*the bright lights of Heaven become dark over us, yea,* "*let the terrors of God ſet themſelves in array againſt* "*us, if we forget thee, O Jeruſalem, if we prefer thee* "*not above our chief joy.*"

Salutary effects at home, it may be hoped, will be ſeen to ariſe from the late combined, benevolent exertions. Miniſters return to their particular work with encreaſed fervour, courage, and union of ſpirit. The people are awakened to regard more ſeriouſly, and to ſearch more deeply into that divine treaſure, which they have themſelves pronounced worthy to be carried to the uttermoſt ends of the earth,

earth. Formality, and religious trifling of every ſpecies and deſcription, will be aſhamed and hide their heads, and every ſupporter of this inſtitution will feel from it an additional motive to adorn the glorious Goſpel, and to expreſs its genuine power and influence.

Is it proper, on ſuch an occaſion, to advert to the ideas of baptized Pagans at home, who wilfully renounce their birth-right of acceſs to the revelation and lively oracles of God? Perhaps the deiſt is prepared to reſume the ſneer of an affected infidel philanthropiſt (Lord Shafteſbury) who mentions with the diſdain of an infernal ſpirit, "*the heroic paſſion of ſaving ſouls.*" But let him know that, even in this corrupted period, there are thouſands whoſe hearts, enlarged by the power of the goſpel, ſwell with generous concern for the ſalvation of far diſtant heathen tribes. And, whatever may be the compariſon in point of intellect, their tender bowels of Chriſtian compaſſion muſt hereafter be contraſted with the frigid and haughty malignity of the infidel, at the tribunal of Jeſus Chriſt, the lover and ſaviour of immortal ſouls.

And let the lukewarm profeſſor of orthodoxy know, that all are not of his ſelfiſh complexion, nor like him, wrapt up in ungenerous complacency, in ſuppoſed perſonal ſafety, ſaying, concerning the periſhing Heathen, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Finally, let every benevolent Chriſtian, rejoice to know, that there are many thouſands aſſociated with him, in warm ſupplications at the throne of grace, and in earneſt endeavours for the wide enlargement and glory of that kingdom, "which is righteouſneſs "and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt." Such ſupplications and endeavours muſt at length prevail; becauſe He lives and reigns in heaven, who hath ſaid, "*Whatſoever ye ſhall aſk in my name, that will I do,* "*that the Father may be glorified in the Son,*" *Amen.*

*The following Circular Letter, ſent to Miniſters in the Country ſince the General Meeting, is ſubjoined, eſpecially, becauſe it contains a Copy of the Plan, and the Liſt of Directors as it now ſtands:*

REV. AND DEAR SIR, AN earneſt deſire having long prevailed in the hearts of many miniſters and private Chriſtians, to make an attempt to evangelize the Heathen, a Committee of Correſpondence, for the purpoſe of engaging the aſſiſtance of others in purſuit of the ſame object, was appointed, and ſome weeks ago had the honour of addreſſing a letter to you. In that letter they announced the intention of holding a general meeting in London, and ſolicited your concurrence, and, if poſſible, the favour of your preſence and aſſiſtance in the conference.

Through the good hand of our God upon us, that meeting has been held; and, we are happy to add, with ſuch circumſtances of numbers, unanimity, and zeal, as induce us to hope, that the Great Head of the Church will deign to ſmile on our humble efforts, and ultimately crown them with diſtinguiſhed ſucceſs.

As ſome of our brethren were neceſſarily prevented from perſonal attendance, we hold it our duty to tranſmit the following conciſe account of our proceedings.

On Monday evening, the 21ſt of September, the firſt general meeting was held at the Caſtle and Falcon, Alderſgate-ſtreet. This was attended by ſuch a numerous and reſpectable company of miniſters and gentlemen, as evinced that the public only waited for the ſignal to unite their efforts towards the attainment of the deſired object. Letters were read from miniſters in various parts of England and Scotland, expreſſive of their deſign to co-operate in whatever might tend to promote the undertaking. Letters were likewiſe read from ſeveral perſons who are inclined to become Miſſionaries.

It was then reſolved, with perfect unanimity, *That it is the opinion of this meeting, that the eſtabliſhment of a ſociety for ſending Miſſionaries to heathen and other unenlightened countries, is highly deſirable.*

On Tueſday morning a great congregation aſſembled at Spa-fields Chapel. Mr. Haweis preached from Mark xvi. 15, 16. Mr. Burder preached in the evening, at Crown-court, from Jonah iii. 2.

On Wedneſday morning Mr. Greatheed preached at Haberdaſher's Hall, from Luke x. 29. and, in the evening, Mr. Hey, at the Tabernacle, from Epheſians i. 10.

On Thurſday morning Mr. Hill preached at Surry Chapel, from Matthew xxiv. 16. and, in the evening, Mr. Bogue, at Tottenham-court Chapel, from Hag. i. 2.

All the above places were exceedingly crowded; and great numbers of perſons were unable to gain admiſſion. About two hundred miniſters were preſent on theſe occaſions. Thoſe who preached, prayed, and engaged in other parts of the ſervices, were much aſſiſted in their work. Pleaſure and delight ſeemed to fill every mind; and, we have reaſon to believe, that theſe ſolemn days will long be remembered with ſatisfaction and praiſe.

The intervals of worſhip were employed in conſtituting the ſociety, of which the following is

THE

# THE PLAN.

I. *The Name*—THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

II. *The Object*—The ſole object is to ſpread the knowledge of Chriſt among heathen and other unenlightened nations.

III. *The Members*—Perſons ſubſcribing one guinea, or more, annually—every benefactor making a donation of ten pounds—one of the executors, on the payment of a legacy amounting to fifty pounds, or upwards; and miniſters, or other repreſentatives of congregations in the country, which ſubſcribe or collect for the uſe of the ſociety five pounds annually.

IV. *General Meetings*—To be held annually in London on the ſecond Wedneſday of May, and oftener if neceſſary, to chuſe a Treaſurer, Directors, Secretary, and Collectors, and to receive reports, audit accounts, and deliberate on what farther ſteps may beſt promote the object of the ſociety.—At every ſuch meeting one ſermon, or more, ſhall be preached by one or more of the aſſociated miniſters, and notice given, as is uſual, on ſuch occaſions; the Preſident for the day ſhall open and conclude the meeting with prayer, and ſign the minutes of the proceedings.—All matters propoſed ſhall be determined by the majority of the members preſent.

V. *The Direction*—To conſiſt of as many Directors, annually choſen out of its members, as circumſtances may require.—At the firſt meeting twenty-five ſhall be elected, with power to aſſociate with themſelves ſuch an additional number, as may be judged by them expedient, when the extent of the ſociety is aſcertained.—Three fifths, and no more, of theſe Directors ſhall reſide in or near London; where all monthly meetings ſhall be held for tranſacting the buſineſs of the ſociety.—Not leſs than ſeven ſhall conſtitute a board.—For greater facility and expedition they may ſubdivide into committees, for managing the funds, conducting the correſpondence, making reports, examining miſſionaries, directing the miſſions, &c. but no act of theſe committees ſhall be valid till ratified at a monthly meeting.—No expenditure exceeding 100l. ſhall be made without conſulting all the Directors, or 500l. without calling a general meeting of the ſubſcribers.—Annual ſubſcribers of 10l. or upwards, and benefactors of 100l. or more, may attend, if they pleaſe, with the Directors, at any of the monthly meetings.—On any emergency the Directors ſhall call a general meeting of the ſociety, to whom their arrangements ſhall be ſubmitted: Nor ſhall they enter upon a new miſſion till they obtain the general concurrence.

VI. *The Funds*—Ariſing from donations, legacies, ſubſcriptions, collections, &c. ſhall be lodged as ſoon as collected, in the hands of the Treaſurer. The Directors ſhall place in the public funds all monies ſo paid, whenever they exceed 300l. until they are required for the uſe of the miſſion; excepting it appears to them prejudicial to the intereſts of the ſociety.

VII. *Salaries*—The Secretary ſhall receive ſuch a ſalary as the Directors may appoint; but the Directors themſelves ſhall tranſact the buſineſs of the ſociety without any emolument.

Joſeph Hardcaſtle, Eſq. Treaſurer, Duck's-foot Lane, Thames-ſtreet.
Rev. John Love, Hoxton,
Mr. William Shrubſole, Old Street Road, } Secretaries.

Agreeably

Agreeably to this plan, the following perſons are already choſen Directors, and are formed into diſtinct committees for the more ready diſpatch of buſineſs:

Mr. John Alday, Carliſle Street, Soho.
John Audley, Eſq. of Cambridge.
Rev. James Boden, Hanley-Green, Staffordſhire.
Rev. David Bogue, A. M. Goſport.
Rev. Joſeph Brookſbank, Newington-Green.
Rev. George Burder, Coventry.
Robert Cowie, Eſq. Iſlington.
Mr. Rob. Campbell, MaryboneStreet.
Rev. John Eyre, A. M. Hackney.
Sam. Foyſter, Eſq. Tottenham Street.
Rev. Samuel Greatheed, Woburn.
Joſ. Hardcaſtle, Eſq. Duck's-foot Lane.
Rev. Rowland Hill, A. M. Surry Chapel.
Rev. Tho. Haweis, L. L. B. Aldwinkle.
Rev. John Hey, Briſtol.
Rev. George Lambert, Hull.
Sir Egerton Leigh, Bt. Warwickſhire.
Rev. Herbert Mends, Plymouth.
James Neale, Eſq. St. Paul's Church Yd.
Rev. W. F. Platt, Holywell Mount.
Rev. Edward Parſons, Leeds.
Rev. John Mead Ray, Sudbury.
Rev. John Reynolds, Hoxton Square.
Rev. John Saltren, Bridport.
Rev. James Steven, Thornhaugh Street.
Mr. Rob. Steven, Upper Thames Street.
Walter Taylor, Eſq. Southampton.
Rev. Alex. Waugh, Alſop's Buildings.
Daniel Weſt, Eſq. Southampton Row.
Rev. Matthew Wilks, Old Street Road.
Rev. Edw. Williams, D. D. Rotherham.
John Wilſon, Eſq. Iſlington.
Thomas Wilſon, Eſq. Wood Street.
Joſeph Wilſon, Eſq. Milk Street.

The Directors having frequently aſſembled, various ſteps have been taken to promote the great object of the ſociety; and very pleaſing information has been received, of peculiar interpoſitions of Providence in our favour. One circumſtance muſt not be omitted: A worthy Gentleman, who had retired to affluence and eaſe from the Eaſt India Service, hearing of our benevolent deſign, has voluntarily ſtept forth, with a generous offer of his ſervices to command any veſſel we may employ in ſending our Miſſionaries to the place of their deſtination. Such an occurrence, unlooked for and unſought, we could not but conſider as an encouraging token of divine approbation.

Dear Sir, the commencement of our great undertaking being thus far ſucceeded, we beg leave, once more, earneſtly to entreat your help. Our exertions muſt neceſſarily be proportioned to our fund. One miſſion is already determined upon. Miſſionaries have offered their ſervices. A ſerious examination of their qualifications will ſoon be made. In the mean time, meaſures will be taken to prepare for their equipment; and the interval between their appointment and their departure, will be employed in rendering them as fit as poſſible for their work. Other miſſions are already in contemplation; and we hope that we ſhall ſoon be able to ſend forth many Miſſionaries to various parts of the world. A ſcheme ſo vaſt and comprehenſive, demands a liberal and extenſive ſupport. Handſome donations and annual ſubſcriptions are already made. But theſe form a ſmall part of what we hope and expect. If you, Sir, and other valuable friends in town and country, will be pleaſed to exert yourſelf in the circle of your congregation and acquaintance, to procure donations and ſubſcriptions, we hope to obtain ſuch a fund as will enable us to employ a conſiderable number of Miſſionaries, who, agreeably to our Saviour's command, ſhall go forth into all the world, and preach the Goſpel to every creature. Dear Sir, let not this favourable opportunity ſlip. We truſt that God, our Saviour, is about to take unto him his great power and reign. Let us unite with pure and perſevering zeal, earneſtly praying that our joint efforts may be crowned with great ſucceſs.

We ſhall feel ourſelves obliged, by the earlieſt information of your endeavours, and the reſult of them, in a letter directed to our Secretary.

*London*, Oct. 5, 1795.

By order of the Directors,
WILLIAM SHRUBSOLE, Jun. Sec.

# SERMONS,

BEFORE THE

*MISSIONARY SOCIETY.*

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## SERMON I.

THE APOSTOLIC COMMISSION,

PREACHED AT

THE SPA FIELDS CHAPEL,

SEPTEMBER 22, 1795.

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BY THE

REV. T. HAWEIS, L. L. B.

CHAPLAIN TO THE LATE COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON, AND RECTOR OF ALL SAINTS,

ALDWINCKLE, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

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## *The Prayer before Sermon.*

THOU great and glorious head of thy Church and people, exalted to the throne of majeſty on high, and reigning till every foe be made thy footſtool, look down in tender compaſſion upon us, who bow before thee, our God and Saviour, and cry for wiſdom and ſtrength; conſcious, that, without thy arm, every effort is impotent, and, without the guidance of thy ſpirit, every counſel is vain.

King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, bleſs the land of our nativity with all the glories of thy reign, that every knee may truly bow to thee, and every tongue in faith confeſs, that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Bleſs the ſovereign, that through thy good providence, ſways the ſceptre of this realm. Give the king thy judgments, O God, that ſo he may reign in the hearts of his people, and over the neck of his and their enemies.

Bleſs the royal family, and every branch of it, and grant that there never may be wanting, to the lateſt times, in the Houſe of Brunſwic, an heir to the throne, endued with thy holy ſpirit, and enriched by thy heavenly grace.

Bleſs the magiſtracy of the land, from the higheſt to the loweſt; may they be men attentive to the duties of their ſtation, and as conſcientiouſly active for the protection and praiſe of well-doers, as for the puniſhment of thoſe who do evil.

Bleſs the clergy of this realm, the archbiſhops, the biſhops, thoſe of the Churches eſtabliſhed in England and Scotland, and all the miniſters of different denominations, that they may hold the unity of the ſpirit

in the bond of peace, and, conſcious how much more important it is to ſpread the glorious Goſpel of the ever bleſſed God, than to diſpute about modes and forms, may we all, purſuing the beſt judgment of our own conſciences, delight to ſhew the ſame indulgence to our brethren, that we claim for ourſelves, and ceaſe from every contention, but who ſhall love the Lord Jeſus Chriſt with trueſt ſincerity, and ſerve him with moſt unſhaken fidelity.

Bleſs, Lord, the great congregation before thee, and look favourably upon the deſign we have in view; and, wakening up in every heart a greater concern about our own ſouls, may we be more anxious for, and exert more vigorous efforts to aſſiſt the ſouls of our brethren. And, in a particular manner, Lord, remember the poor Heathen; and, may thy ſervants be ſtirred up this day to concentre their efforts for communicating to them thine everlaſting Goſpel. Endue us with hearts of deeper ſenſibility for their ignorance and miſery; enflame us with more ardent love, ſuch as apoſtles, martyrs, and confeſſors, have felt; beſtow on us the holy wiſdom to plan, the undaunted courage to execute, and unwearied patience to perſevere in the work, till we ſhall ſee the bright beams of truth piercing through the clouds of darkneſs, and the ſun of righteouſneſs ariſing with healing in his wings on the moſt diſtant lands, the habitations of cruelty, and the regions of the ſhadow of death.

Bleſs, Lord, the word that may now be ſpoken, and all the words of the brethren appointed to ſtir up our minds, by way of remembrance, for the great object we have in view; and, pitying our infirmities, and pardoning our iniquities, beſtow the full import of the prayer, which thou thyſelf, in compaſſion to our ignorance, haſt taught us,

Our Father, &c.

SER.

# SERMON I.

MARK xvi. 15. 16.

*And he ſaid unto them, go into all the World, and Preach the Goſpel to every Creature; he that believeth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved, and he that believeth not, ſhall be damned.*

IT is with thankfulneſs and delight, that I look round on this great congregation, aſſembled for the nobleſt purpoſes, that can intereſt the beſt feelings of the human heart. No ſchemes of worldly advantage—no projects of vain ambition—no ſelfiſh ends or aims—contaminate our views. Nor will the *confuſed noiſe of the warrior, or garments rolled in blood*, mark our progreſs. We meet under the conduct of the Prince of Peace, and, unfurling the banner of his croſs, deſire to carry the glad tidings of his ſalvation to the diſtant lands, deep ſunk in Heathen darkneſs, and covered with the ſhadow of death.

The petty diſtinctions among us, of names, and forms; the diverſities of adminiſtrations, and modes of church order, we agree, ſhall this day all be merged in the greater, nobler, and characteriſtic name of CHRISTIANS; and our one ambition be, to promote no partial intereſts, ſince Chriſt is not divided, but with united efforts to make known abroad, the glory of his perſon—the perfection of his work—the wonders of his grace—and the tranſcendent bleſſings of his redemption—where his adorable

adorable name hath never yet been heard; but the God of this world ſtill reigns the uncontrouled tyrant over the bodies and the ſouls of men.

The infidel, indeed, derides; the careleſs look on with indifference; and the cold hearted profeſſor of every denomination is too much engroſſed with ſelfiſh intereſts and earthly purſuits, to think of the concerns of immortal ſouls; of Heathens; of creatures of a different colour from our own—unleſs, perhaps, when the philanthropy and zeal of others awaken their enmity or their envy; and then, like Sanballat and Tobiah, they would interrupt the work of God, put difficulties in the way, or pour contempt on the undertaking; as though, "if but "a fox go up, he ſhall break down their ſtone wall. "Hear, O our God, for we are deſpiſed; and turn "their reproach upon their own heads!" Nehem. "iv. 4.

We own our efforts are feeble, and our abilities ſmall; but great events often flow from cauſes apparently inſignificant. In the time of drought and famine in Iſrael, the cloud no bigger than a man's hand, was the prelude to abundance of rain. 1 Kings xviii. 44. If God will work, then none ſhall let it. The little portion of ſnow detached from the ſummit of the higheſt Alps, ſwells in its deſcent, into a mighty Avalanche *, and, thundering down the mountain's ſide, ſweeps before it every obſtacle. Hath not our glorious head the reſidue of the ſpirit? Can he not raiſe up again inſtruments from the meaneſt of mankind, to produce changes great, as when he ſent twelve poor fiſhermen to overturn triumphant ſuperſtition and idolatry, ſupported as they were by all the powers of empire, and the wiſdom of philoſophy? Is his hand ſhortened, that it cannot ſave? Let no man's heart then

* *Avalanche* is a collection of ſnow, frequent in Switzerland, deſcending from the Alps, and, gathering into an immenſe maſs, buries whole villages beneath it.



fail,

ſail, THOUGH WE ARE WEAK, OUR REDEEMER IS MIGHTY.

But are there not others more reſpectable than ourſelves, wiſer, and poſſeſſed of greater wealth and power for ſuch an undertaking? aſſuredly. But muſt we for ever, like the clown, wait for the river's flowing by?

I am ſorry to unveil the nakedneſs of the Land. Thou Lord ſeeſt it, and every ſenſible Chriſtian is conſcious of the fact. It does not admit of concealment.

God knows, I deſire to ſpeak ſine odio, ſine ira, ſine invidia.* But I muſt ſay, the members of the eſtabliſhed religion are too much engaged after the purſuits of earthly dignities and emoluments, to quit them for a field ſo barren, as that we wiſh to cultivate. Nor can any thing truly great, noble, and evangelical, be expected from thoſe, who *look every man to his gain from his quarter*. And ſtill leſs is to be hoped from ſuch, as, ſeparated from the eſtabliſhed Church, have renounced not only her forms, but the God we worſhip. Even of thoſe who profeſs the tenets of barren orthodoxy, how many have turned their zeal from the power of religion to this world's politics? or gravely meet, merely to diſcuſs the important means of promoting *the diſſenting intereſt*.

Non tali auxilio, aut defenſoribus iſtis
Opus egit.†

* Uninfluenced by diſlike, reſentment, or envy.

As I wiſh not to be miſunderſtood in any expreſſions, here uſed, or in any other part. I ſolemly declare, that it is neither my intention, nor inclination to reflect on any man, or body of men, becauſe they are not united with us in this, or on various other modes of procedure. I am conſcious, that there are many, very many ſuch, both among my brethren in the Church, and among the Diſſenters, whoſe piety and zeal I reverence, and ſhould be happy more abundantly to imitate. *No good man*, therefore, ſhould be offended with, or apply to himſelf, what is ſolely and only addreſſed, to the careleſs, the worldly minded, and the lukewarm. When we are faithful to ſuch men's conſciences, they will either be angry with us, or with themſelves.

† By ſuch men, and ſuch efforts, the cauſe can never be promoted.

It may be ſaid indeed, that there are ſocieties already eſtabliſhed for propagating the goſpel, and promoting religious knowledge, and they have funds, thouſands, hundreds of thouſands, appropriated for theſe purpoſes. But, except the books diſtributed by them, many of which are excellent, what hath ever yet been effectually done? As a miſſionary ſociety where are their apoſtles? A pecuniary aſſiſtance has indeed been given to the Daniſh miſſion; But in what land is the voice, are the ſufferings of *their* miſſionaries heard? what converts appear the fruits of their labours? where is the croſs of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt erected, preached, and glorified by their ſtipendiaries? Read their reports. In this line their efforts are below contempt.

Indeed how ſhould the real Goſpel of our great God and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, be ever advanced by thoſe, who have never themſelves experienced the true grace of God, wherein we ſtand,—who would treat as enthuſiaſtic, a divine call to the work,—and by whom a miſſionary ſpirit, (for I ſpeak what I have repeatedly experienced) would be eſteemed the moſt inſurmountable obſtacle to be employed in that bleſſed ſervice.

But, my brethren, I turn this day to you, however the objects of contempt to proud prieſts, or frozen ſectaries. If God be for us, we will not fear who may be againſt us: if he ſmiles approbation on our endeavours, we will diſregard the frowns of abuſed authority, and deſpiſe the ſneers of ſupercilious ſelf-importance. That we may be inferior in the ſcale of earthly diſtinction. Preferment, Power, Wealth, and attainments in mathematics, or metaphyſicks, we will admit. But we have taſted that the Lord is gracious.—We have felt in the approaches to a crucified Jeſus, what it coſt him to redeem our ſouls from death, and to hide the multitude of our ſins.—We have been taught of God

God to know the value of our *own* ſouls, and that hath filled us with tender concern for thoſe of our fellow ſinners. We judge no object important, but as it relates to what is ſpiritual and eternal; and count one immortal ſoul gained for Chriſt, a greater acquiſition than all the mines of Golconda. Animated with ſuch a feeling ſenſe of divine truth; (and what is religion without feeling?) animated, I ſay, with ſuch a fervent deſire after the ſouls of men, redeemed by the ſame price as our own, we long to communicate to them, the ſame goſpel, which we have ourſelves embraced. Should we fail of ſucceſs, the very attempt would be noble; ſhould we ſucceed, glorious.

And why not ſucceed? when *the ſhout of a King is among us*; and He, *the King eternal, immortal, inviſible, the only wiſe God, our Saviour?* Hath he not promiſed *to be with us always, even to the end of the world?* "Awake then, awake, O arm of the "Lord, put on thy ſtrength; awake as in the an-"tient days, in the generations of old."

Encouraged, emboldened by ſuch views, we have been lifting up the voice of Prayer to the Spirit of God and Glory, that he may reſt upon us, and our undertaking—fill us with divine wiſdom,—animate us with fervent zeal,—and kindle in our hearts, that love to our heathen Brethren, which many waters of temptation ſhall never quench, nor the floods of difficulties drown. Say to the children of Iſrael, between Pihahiroth, and Baalzephon, in the face of the pathleſs ocean, GO FORWARD.

Hear then the voice of the great Leader and Commander who yet ſpeaketh from heaven. "Go "into all the world, and preach the goſpel to every "creature, he that believeth, and is baptized, ſhall "be ſaved, and he that believeth not ſhall be "damned."

The words contain the following particulars, ſuitable to the preſent occaſion.

1. Where we muſt go.
2. Who are to be ſent.
3. What they muſt preach.
4. The reſult of their miſſion.

1. Whither we muſt go: *into all the world.*

*The Goſpel*, we know, before the end of time, *muſt be preached in all the world for a witneſs unto all nations**. But few of them, comparatively, have yet enjoyed its light, or felt its influence. *Darkneſs ſtill covers the earth, and groſs darkneſs the people.* Whoever caſts his eye over the terreſtrial globe will ſee, if he is a Chriſtian, with grief and anguiſh of heart, the multitudes of nations, who *know not God, and obey not his goſpel*: on whom no beam of the ſun of righteouneſs hath yet ariſen with healing in his wings; but to this day, *groping for the wall as blind*, they *walk on ſtill in darkneſs*, and *all the foundations of the earth are out of courſe.*

I might indeed begin at home, and with too great truth obſerve, how little real, vital, chriſtianity is to be found among thoſe, who have aſſumed the profeſſion of it. Not only have Popiſh ſuperſtition and idolatry blinded, and enſlaved the principal kingdoms of Europe, but even in that portion, which glories in the name of Proteſtant, † the ſtar Wormwood, hath fallen upon the waters, and embittered them with the fatal errors of Pelagius, Arius, and Socinus: and thus have the flood-gates been opened for that deluge of Infidelity, which threatens to raze the very foundations of the chriſtian faith; and, *if it were poſſible*,‡ that the adored name of God our Saviour, ſhould be had no more in remembrance. Even in our own land, who, that is

* Matt. xxiv. 14.

† Rev. viii. 11. ‡ Mark xix. 22.

on

on the Lord's ſide, doth not lament theſe deſolations, and tremble for their conſequences? The faſhion of the day indeed is to be humane, liberal, munificent: every want finds relief, and every diſeaſe an aſylum, but the ſouls of men, who careth for? the very idea is in general treated as enthuſiaſtic, and infidelity daringly ſuggeſts, that mankind may do as well without chriſtianity, as with it.

Happily there is yet found a generation, who ſigh for theſe abominations,--feel the religion of Jeſus eſſential to life and hope--experience the conſtrainings of divine charity--and, undiſmayed by the difficulties of the attempt, deſire to ſeek the ſheep of Chriſt, diſperſed through this preſent evil world.

Turn then, my brethren, your eyes to the burning ſands of Afric, where ſcarce a gleam of light illumines the darkneſs, from the Pillars of Hercules, to the Cape of Good Hope. There the benighted minds of men, darker than their complexions, offer a ſcene dreadful as pitiable. There the ſweet ſounds of Goſpel grace are never heard, and millions upon millions brutalized by ſuperſtitions, cruel as deſpicable, are led captive by the Devil at his will, alike ſtrangers to their ruin as their remedy.

Paſs to the vaſt continent of Aſia, abundantly more populous than Europe. Under the Government of China alone, there are ſaid to be three hundred million ſouls, and perhaps not an individual, that *knows the true God, and Jeſus Chriſt, whom he hath ſent.*

On the beautiful banks of the Ganges, where we have riſen to wealth and empire, how ſhameful hath been our ſupineneſs and indifference reſpecting any communication of Goſpel truth to the poor Hindoos? Among ten million ſubjects to the India company, I have never yet read of a ſingle miſſionary

ſent

ſent by them. Commercial Chriſtians ſeem to worſhip no other God, but Gold.

The vaſt regions within and without the Ganges, the immenſe Plains of Tartary, the Kingdoms of Siam, Pegu, Japan, and the extenſive iſlands which ſpread through the Indian Ocean, preſent one awful blank. Chaotic darkneſs, ſtill brooding on the abyſs, ſpreads its wings, and not a ray of truth ſheds its bleſt influence from one end of theſe countries to the other. But Idols, horrid as obſcene, fill every Pagoda, and abominations, that, but to name, were ſhameful.

A new world hath lately opened to our view, call it Iſland or Continent, that exceeds Europe in ſize, New Holland; and now become the receptacle of our outcaſts of ſociety.--New Zealand, and the innumerable iſlands, which ſpot the boſom of the Pacific Ocean, on each ſide of the Line, from Endeavour Straits to the Coaſts of America, many of them full of inhabitants,--occupying lands, which ſeem to realize the fabled Gardens of the Heſperides,--where the fragrant groves, which cover them from the ſultry beams of day, afford them food, and clothing; whilſt the ſea offers continual plenty of its inexhauſtible ſtores; and the day paſſes in eaſe and affluence, and the night in muſic and dancing. But amidſt theſe enchanting ſcenes, ſavage nature * ſtill feaſts on the fleſh of its priſoners—appeaſes its Gods with human ſacrifices—whole ſocieties of men and women live promiſcuouſly, and murder every infant born amongſt them;--whilſt every turpitude, committed in the face of open day, proclaims, that ſhame is as little felt, as a ſenſe of ſin is known.

Ye untutored offspring of fallen nature! how are ye to be pitied! ye have wondered at our ſhips, admired the colour of our ſkin, and been contami-

* At Otaheite, they ſeem to have renounced this horrid cuſtom.

nated

nated by our vices, and have known to our confuſion, that thoſe who have infected you with their abominations, bore the name of CHRISTIANS. It remains, I hope for us, my brethren, to redeem the character of that ſacred name, and the honour of our nation.

No region of the world, which I have yet obſerved, (and I have conſidered the matter with much attention) affords us happier proſpects in our auſpicious career of ſending the Goſpel to the Heathen lands; no where are the obſtacles apparently leſs, or the opportunities greater, for the admiſſion of the truth, as it is in Jeſus. No perſecuting government,--no Brahmanic caſts to oppoſe,--no inhoſpitable climate to endure,--a language of little difficulty to attain,---and of vaſt extent,--with free acceſs, and every prejudice in our favour.

But this ſubject will, I hope, be diſcuſſed by us in many a conference, and the particulars would occupy too large a ſpace, to be admitted into this diſcourſe. I ſhall only obſerve, that, if our brethren the Moravians, whoſe zeal for the Saviour, and love for men's ſouls, I ſhall always delight to mention to their honour, (oh, that we may imitate their fervour, and ſurpaſs them in ſucceſs!) if they have been bleſt, beneath the frozen mountains of Greenland; if they, accompanying the thinly ſcattered hordes of ſavage Eſkimaux, have lived on whale's fleſh and ſeal oil, to make the name of Jeſus precious to them, what may we not hope, with any ſimilar fidelity, among the populous borders of Otaheite, or the friendly inhabitants of Anamooka, or Tongataboo*?

The world indeed is wide, and the field vaſt for miſſions. Circumſtances will determine our choice, where to begin with the happieſt proſpect of ſucceſs. The Lord direct our determinations, and crown our attempts with his benediction! At his

* There are more inhabitants in Otaheite alone, than in all Greenland, and the vaſt coaſts of Labrador.

command

command we launch into the deep, and wiſh to carry his everlaſting Goſpel to the ends of the earth.

But, ſecondly, *whom ſhall we ſend, and who will go for us?* I anſwer, ſuch as the Lord hath prepared, and qualified for the arduous taſk. Men, whoſe lives are not dear unto themſelves, but ready to ſpend, and be ſpent in the honourable ſervice.—Men, really moved by the Holy Ghoſt, to devote themſelves to the work,--not daring blaſphemouſly in the face of God, and the Congregation, to make ſuch a confeſſion, merely to procure a miſſion from man, and pave the way to honour and emolument, over a conſcience, that knows, *it hath lied to the Holy Ghoſt.*--Men, who have an internal evidence of the ſpirit, *witneſſing with their ſpirits, that they are the children of God*;--a divine ardor, prompting them to prefer the ſalvation of men's ſouls, to every earthly conſideration,--and to determine on this purſuit, in the face of every difficulty and danger which may attend it. Such are the men, the great Shepherd and Biſhop of Souls ſends, ſuch are the inſtruments we muſt ſeek.

Nor need we deſpair of finding them, if not in the ſchools of learning, or the ſeminaries of theology, yet among the faithful, in our ſeveral congregations.

Not that I think lightly of the advantages of education, or deſpiſe attainments of learning of any kind. Few have been found more indefatigable in the purſuit of theſe acquirements, than ſome, whom I am now addreſſing, and if we are treated with inſolent contempt, by thoſe, who imagine themſelves the only wiſe and learned, we have to regret that our abilities have not equalled our application.

But here alſo God hath in his hands the hearts of all men. There may be found among the ſons of the Prophets, ſome, who glorying in the croſs, will feel it their privilege to lift up the ſtandard,

and proclaim the crucified Lord, to their fellow ſinners of the Heathen. Not that the knowledge of the dead languages, however deſirable, is eſſential to the communication of Goſpel Truth in the living ones. A plain man,--with a good natural underſtanding,--well read in the Bible,--full of faith, and of the Holy Ghoſt--,though he comes from the forge, or the ſhop, would, I own, in my view, as a miſſionary to the Heathen, be infinitely preferable to all the learning of the ſchools; and would poſſeſs, in the ſkill and labour of his hands, advantages, which barren ſcience would never compenſate.

But who ſhall judge of the *qualifications of miſſionaries?* I reply, ſuch as have themſelves been taught of God; and whoſe age and experience, in the good ways of our Saviour, enable them to diſcern between the ebullitions of miſtaken zeal, and the deliberate devotedneſs of one truly ſent and moved by the Holy Ghoſt.

I am, my brethren, an Epiſcopalian, and by choice, as by education, attached to the eſtabliſhed Church, and wiſh to ſee her a glory in the earth; and I am perſuaded, there is not one of you, my friends, of whatever denomination, but would delight therein. Yet I am no bigot, I neither ſuppoſe ſalvation reſtricted to her pale, nor the approbation of her rulers, however deſirable, eſſential to an evangelical miſſion. Indeed, it is an axiom, to which every real Chriſtian will accede, that no dignity of office, whether Biſhop or Archbiſhop, nor a whole Preſbytery, however wiſe or learned, if they have not themſelves experienced the divine call, and been inwardly moved by the Holy Ghoſt, to take the ſacred miniſtry upon them, (and the great Shepherd and Biſhop of Souls, hath already pronounced, that otherwiſe HE will regard them as thieves and robbers,) ſuch men I ſay, can be no more capable of judging the qualifi-

cations

cations of a miſſionary, than the ſtupid Omiah to ſolve the moſt difficult propoſition in Euclid, or a deaf man to decide on the beauty of harmonical compoſition. Thoſe qualified to judge of a miſſionary call muſt have drank into a like ſpirit. Whoſe eye is ſingle to the divine glory,--whoſe heart hath taſted that the Lord is gracious,--whoſe life is habitually devoted to the work and ſervice of God;--and whoſe exemplary zeal for the Redeemer's glory, is demonſtrated in ſelf-denied obedience, deadneſs to the world, and actual labours for immortal ſouls; ENDURING THE CROSS, DESPISING THE SHAME.

Such, I doubt not, my brethren, will be found among you, who will count themſelves honoured and happy in the ſacred charge, committed to them, of examining the candidates, and *praying in the Holy Ghoſt** for direction will decide, *without partiality and without hypocriſy.*

But 3dly: What muſt the miſſionary preach? THE GOSPEL, to every creature; the pure, powerful, unadulterated Goſpel of our great God and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. "And if I, or an angel "from heaven preach any other Goſpel, let him be "accurſed†." How important then is it for ourſelves, for our work, that we ſhould have clear, and preciſe views of the great fundamentals, which conſtitute the eſſence of Chriſtianity, and without which it would be *another Goſpel?*

And here, brethren, it is impoſſible for me not to advert to the ſhameful and fatal indifference about theſe doctrines, which, even among many, who preſume to call themſelves chriſtians, is ſo fearfully entertained. A ſyſtem of heathen Ethics, which they have honoured with the name of chriſtian morality, hath been ſubſtituted inſtead of the

* Jud. 20. † Gal. i. 8.

Goſpel

goſpel of Chriſt, and conſidered as all ſufficient for ſalvation: and, that, if among *us Chriſtians*, the faith of the Goſpel be taken in, as a make weight, the ſalvation would be very ſecure without it; however expreſs the declaration, that only "he that "believeth and is baptiſed, ſhall be ſaved, and he "that believeth not ſhall be damned."

It would lead me too far out of my way to unveil the ignorance, detect the errors, and confound the confidences of the unawakened, the unhumbled, and the ſelf-righteous. Suffice it to ſay, in the words of our Lord, "they that are whole, need "not a phyſician, but they that are ſick*." Till God ſhews a man the plague of his own heart;--his inbred corruption;--his carnal mind;--which is enmity againſt God, and impotent to obey him;--his many, great, and fearful departures from the living God; in thought, word, and deed, tranſgreſſing againſt the divine majeſty, and, therefore, moſt juſtly deſerving his wrath and indignation †; till God the ſpirit thus convinces of ſin, ſurdo narras fabulam ‡; the Goſpel hath nothing to procure it a welcome, "Hearing, men hear, and never underſtand; and "ſeeing, ſee, and do not perceive; becauſe their "fooliſh hearts are darkened." Proud Phariſaiſm, and infidel ſelf-ſufficiency, will always inſolently ſay, *are we blind alſo?* and thus *they ſtumble at the word* (απειθεις alike infidel as) *diſobedient, whereunto alſo they were appointed.* 1. Pet. ii. 8.

What then are the doctrines eſſential to the name of Goſpel, which believed ſecure ſalvation, and which not believed, leave the ſoul ſealed up under wrath, unto the judgment of the great day?

* Matt. ix. 12.

† See Communion Confeſſion. ‡ You addreſs the deaf.

As a miniſter of the Church of England, I might refer you to thoſe articles of faith, which, having ſubſcribed, ex animo, I ſolemnly declare, in the preſence of God, I have ever ſince, to the beſt of my abilities, endeavoured, for nearly forty years, to preach and teach. The ſame doctrines are contained in the Helvetic confeſſion, the Aſſembly's Catechiſm, and every reformed Church in Chriſtendom. In all which, Jeſus Chriſt is the chief corner ſtone;--his Godhead and glory expreſsly defined;--his vicarious ſacrifice in the human nature laid down as the ſure foundation of a ſinner's hope;--his obedience to death imputed to us for righteouſneſs by faith alone;--his ſpirit communicated, as quickening the dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, and giving faith, and every grace, by his own divine inſpiration;--producing righteouſneſs and true holineſs;--and leading infallibly to *eternal life, the gift of God, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* O bleſſed glorious Goſpel of our great God and Saviour! of which he is the ſum and ſubſtance, the Alpha and Omega, the all and in all. Whom thus to know, by the revelation of himſelf, is everlaſting life; and whom not to know, or to deny his eternal glory and Godhead, is everlaſting death *.

I need not tell you, brethren, that our day hath produced men, pretending high veneration for the Goſpel, and yet daring *to deny the Lord, who bought us* with his blood; and varniſh over their degrading ſyſtems, that they may be more eaſily accommodated to philoſophical reaſoning, and better calculated to evade the offence of the croſs. But, my brethren, WE *have not ſo learned Chriſt:* nor dare we ſacrifice *the truth as it is in Jeſus*, to falſe pleas of candor and liberality; or admit Latitudinarian principles, as at all conſiſtent with *one Lord, one faith* †.

* See John iii. 36. † Eph. iv. 5.

There

There are indeed, ſome, who affecting excluſive zeal for morality and good works, ſcruple not falſely to ſuggeſt, that we by faith make them void. But their ſuggeſtions only ſhew their utter ignorance of our principles, and demonſtrate, how unacquainted they are with the power *of the love of God ſhed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghoſt given unto us:* while THEIR WHOLE CONVERSATION evidences, that they are themſelves as far from righteouſneſs, and true holineſs, in practice, as they are ſtrangers in ſpirit to the firſt elements of the Goſpel of Chriſt.

We appeal to the experience of all ages, what ever did, or ever can controul the unruly wills and affections of ſinful men, but the preaching the Croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; by whom, ſaith St. Paul, *the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.* Without this, what could a miſſionary effect in a heathen land? How poor, how unavailing would be all the weapons of vain philoſophy, and falſe Chriſtianity? Imbelle Telum ſine ictu*.

Brethren, our whole ſucceſs will depend upon this one point;—if Chriſt be preached,—only preached,—always preached,—then ſhall we ſee the power of his death and reſurrection, and the Lord will add again *daily to his church of ſuch as ſhall be ſaved.*

Which brings me to the laſt particular, *the reſult and conſequences of ſuch a miſſion.* "He that be-
"lieveth and is baptiſed ſhall be ſaved, and he that
"believeth not, awful alternative! ſhall be damned."

Many falſe chriſtians, under the cloak of pretended charity, have long been pleaſed to expreſs their indulgent hope of mercy for the Heathen, whatever their religious creed may be, and ſome yet more liberal, have boldly taken upon themſelves the confident exerciſe of divine favour to every individual of the human race, in a final reſtitution;

* The feeble effort of impotence.

and theſe are not a little ſevere upon us, uncharitable bigots, who neither daring to indulge vain conjecture, nor torture truth to ſupport preconceived opinions, are confined to the narrow circle of revelation, nor affect *to be wiſe above what is written.* We acknowledge our belief that only few ſhall be ſaved; we ſuppoſe our Lord a faithful and true witneſs in his declaration, "that ſtrait is the gate, "and narrow the road which leadeth to life, and that "there are few that find it, whilſt the gate to deſtruc-"tion is wide, and the many go in thereat*, that "the wicked, wherever found, will be turned into "hell†, and all the nations, (however many or "mighty) who know not, or forget God, and obey "not his Goſpel." It would be endleſs, and to you, my brethren, unneceſſary to multiply ſcriptures on a ſubject, wherein, I am perſuaded, we are fully agreed. Indeed it is the importance, the neceſſity of believing the truth, in order to ſalvation, that this day collects us in the houſe of God, to unite our efforts in deviſing the means, of ſending the everlaſting Goſpel to the poor Heathen,--to call them "from darkneſs unto light, and from the "power of Satan unto God,--that they, with us, "may receive an inheritance among thoſe, who are "ſanctified by faith which is in Jeſus Chriſt."

It is with the ſentiments of this divine charity, we are inflamed. We think, we ſhould merit all their charges of ſeverity, and uncharitableneſs if we ſat down with folded arms, with all theſe denunciations in our view, and regarded with cold indifference, the travail of the Redeemer's ſoul. Yes, my dear friends, "it is becauſe we believe the wrath re-"vealed from heaven againſt all ungodlineſs and un-"righteouſneſs of men," and have felt ſomething of the compaſſions of the friend of ſinners, that ani-

* Matt. vii. 13. † Pſalm ix. 17. Theſſ. i. 8.

mated

mated by a meaſure of that ſpirit, which led him to die a death of torment on the accurſed tree, to ſave the miſerable, the helpleſs and the deſperate, we are thus earneſt to pluck ſome of the brands from the burning,—to plead with them, why will ye die;—and "to beſeech them, by all the tender mercies "of their incarnate God," and ours, "to preſent "themſelves to him, living ſacrifices, their bodies, "ſouls, and ſpirits, holy and acceptable, which is "our reaſonable ſervice."

We are ſure, that *only* they, who believe, ſhall be ſaved. "But how ſhall they believe on him, of whom "they have not heard? and how ſhall they hear with-"out a preacher? and how ſhall they preach except "they be ſent?" beautiful indeed will be the feet of thoſe who preach the glad tidings of peace, and bleſſed next to thoſe, who willingly offer themſelves to the ſervice, will be they who ſend them.

We know, brethren, (for I ſpeak to thoſe, who have themſelves experienced the grace of God, in truth) we know, that the goſpel is the power of "God unto ſalvation to every one that believeth*:" and entertain the reviving confidence, that wherever God, in his providence, opens a door of utterance and entrance, there hath he a people, *who ſhall be to the eternal praiſe of the glory of his grace: whom he hath not appointed unto wrath, but to obtain ſalvation through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* The doctrines of faith, will lead to the grace of faith, through the mighty efficacy of the ſpirit of faith, and "the juſtified will "be glorified†."

Oh, with what tranſports of delight ſhall we meet at the right hand of the ſon of God, thoſe, to whoſe eternal ſalvation we may have been happily inſtrumental, by ſending to them, the glorious goſpel of the bleſſed God, and whom unſeen, and un-

* Rom. i. 16. † Rom. viii. 30.

known,

known, we have loved and longed for in the bowels of Jesus Christ?

That "they who believe not will be damned," we dare no more doubt than that those, "who be-"lieve and are baptised will be saved." How can we? when the same authority sanctions the promise and the warning. And under such a conviction what zeal will it not work in us? Yea, what active energy to help, if yet there may be hope? where will the exercise of divine charity be truly found? with such as sit supinely still in the presumptuous confidence, that it is needless to warn sinners, ready to perish, to flee from the wrath to come? Or with those, who animated by holy pity, and fervent love, rush through fire and water to seek and save that which was lost?

Thus, I trust, affected, and with such views of the aweful truth of that word, which abideth forever in heaven, are we all here before God this day, invoking his benediction, and encouraging each others hearts to *this work of faith* and *labour of love.*

We know the time approaches when Ethiopia and Saba shall stretch out their hands unto God: when "the ends of the earth shall remember them-"selves, and be turned unto the Lord, and all flesh "shall see the salvation of our God." From which extremity of the earth, the lightning shall flash, we know not; but one thing we know, that when the blessed period fix'd in his eternal counsels arrives, he will provide the means, and raise up the instruments, to fulfill all his pleasure. We hope he will favour, and graciously accept, our humble efforts to this end, and cause many to say, "here am I, "Lord, send me."

It would take up too much of your time at present, to suggest the steps most eligible to be pursued. These will be the subject of repeated consideration, and matured by the united wisdom of a body, far superior to any individual. In one thing only,

only, I indulge the fulleſt confidence, that nothing will be wanting to furniſh every neceſſary ſupply for a numerous miſſion. "The ſilver, and "the gold are thine." Theſe have often been laviſhed by our fellow citizens, to procure luxuries from the ends of the earth; and ſometimes more fearfully to deluge the world with blood. Let us teach them a nobler uſe of riches, and procure for ourſelves greater indulgences, the luxury of doing good; and inſtead of deſtroying men's bodies, employ them to ſave their ſouls.

May God our Saviour, proſper the attempt. Endue us with wiſdom, zeal, and perſevering diligence, and crown the labour with ſucceſs, for the glory of his own great name, who liveth and reigneth with the Father and the Holy Ghoſt, the only true Jehovah, to whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever! Amen.

# JONAH's MISSION TO NINEVEH.

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## SERMON II.

PREACHED BY

GEORGE BURDER,

OF COVENTRY,

AT THE REV. MR. STEVEN'S MEETING-HOUSE,
CROWN-COURT, ON TUESDAY EVENING,
SEPT. 22, 1795.

# SERMON II.

JONAH iii. 2.

*Ariſe, go unto Nineveh, that great City, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.*

I SHALL readily be credited, eſpecially by my brethren in the miniſtry, when I ſay that I feel a peculiar awe upon my mind on the preſent occaſion, ariſing, not merely from the number and reſpectability of the audience, but from the magnitude and importance of the buſineſs on which we meet. At any time, the conſciouſneſs of being employed to ſpeak for God--to treat with immortal ſouls on the concerns of eternity, is enough to ſolemnize the mind. But now, in addition to theſe conſiderations, I feel myſelf engaged in a new and arduous work. I ſtand up as the advocate of thouſands, of millions of ſouls, periſhing for lack of knowledge. I ſtand up to plead the cauſe of Chriſt, too, too long neglected by us all—to plead the cauſe of the poor benighted heathen—to lay before you their miſerable ſtate—to convey to your ears and hearts the cry of their wretchedneſs—O that it may penetrate your ſouls—"Come over—Come over, and help us."

If I had thought that the ſucceſs of this great enterprize depended in the leaſt degree on the powers of eloquence, I ſhould certainly have declined the taſk which the partiality of my friends has im-

poſed upon me. Many, many others might have been found much fitter for the work, but none, I believe, more ſincerely deſirous of its ſucceſs. And I am not a little animated by the belief, that a large part of this aſſembly is poſſeſſed of feelings in uniſon with my own.

Amidſt a multitude of texts, which preſſed on my mind, ſuited in ſome degree to the object before us, it was not eaſy to determine on any one, which might exactly comprehend all that I wiſhed to ſay; at length, however, I fixed on the words which have been read; they contain God's ſecond command to the Prophet Jonah; requiring him to go on a miſſion to Nineveh; a ſervice he had before declined; and if I miſtake not, we ſhall find ſeveral hints of inſtruction in the paſſage, adapted to our preſent undertaking.

*When God has deſigns of mercy to a people, he will ſend a meſſenger to them, to call them to repentance.*

The populous city of Nineveh had become exceedingly wicked; *their wickedneſs*, ſaid the Lord, Chap. i. 2. *is come up before me. Go*, therefore, ſaid he, *and cry againſt it.* The Lord could certainly have brought them to repentance without employing Jonah; but it is his general method to bring ſouls to ſalvation by the inſtrumentality of his miniſters. In like manner, when the Eunuch of Ethiopia was to be converted, Philip was commanded to join himſelf to that nobleman's chariot. When that devout Roman officer Cornelius, was to become a Chriſtian, Peter muſt be diſpatched *to tell him words, whereby he and all his houſe might be ſaved.* (Acts. xi. 14.)

*We may next obſerve, that when difficulty and danger attend the delivery of God's meſſage, his ſervants are too apt to decline the taſk.*

Thus Jonah, inſtead of flying with zeal to reſcue the Ninevites from ruin, ſhunned the arduous work, and fled to Tarſhiſh from the preſence of the Lord.

O, how

O, how many of the Lord's ſervants have been like-minded? Has not each of us been, at times, a Jonah? Are we not all implicated in the charge? We have loved our eaſe too well to forſake our neſts in England---to bid adieu to civilized ſociety, ---to encounter the dangers of the ocean---to learn a barbarous language,---to riſk our lives among ſavages, in order to bring them to Chriſt and ſalvation. The time is however come, I truſt, when we ſhall be convinced, that it is not right that we ſhould *all* remain in Britain, while ſuch vaſt numbers of our fellow creatures claim our pity, and our exertions abroad.

*We may further obſerve, that God is greatly diſpleaſed with thoſe who ſhun his work, becauſe of its danger; and that, in fact, we expoſe ourſelves by diſobedience, to far greater dangers than thoſe we would avoid.*

When Jonah thought he had exonerated himſelf from the heavy taſk of converting Ninevites ---when he was ſo ſecure in the ſhip, as to ſleep with the greateſt compoſure, *the Lord ſent out a great wind into the ſea, and there was a mighty tempeſt in the ſea, ſo that the ſhip was like to be broken.* Ch. i. 4. The Lord, by the deſignation of a lot, pointed HIM out as the greateſt aggreſſor, among a crew of heathen ſailors; he was caſt into the ſea by divine permiſſion; ſwallowed up by an enormous fiſh prepared for the purpoſe; and miraculouſly preſerved alive in that ſituation, for three days. What a plain indication was this of the divine diſpleaſure! what an awful method of conſtraining Jonah to be a miſſionary! Permit me to ſuggeſt my firm belief, that we have offended in the ſame manner; and may *we* not ſuppoſe that the Lord is diſpleaſed with us? Under the law of Moſes, proviſion was made for the relief even of brutes in diſtreſs. *If*, ſaith the Lord, *thou meet thine enemy's ox, or his aſs, going aſtray, thou ſhall ſurely bring it back to him again. If thou ſeeſt the aſs of him that hateth thee, lying*

*lying under his burden, and wouldſt forbear to help him, thou ſhalt ſurely help with him.* Exod. xiii. 4. 5. "Doth God take care for oxen?" Doth he require compaſſion to a beaſt, and will he not reſent the neglect of men? Aſſuredly he will. Obſerve what he ſaith, Prov. xxiv. 11, 12. *If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and thoſe that are ready to be ſlain; if thou ſayeſt, Behold, we knew it not: doth not he that pondereth the heart conſider it? and he that keepeth thy ſoul, doth not he know it? and ſhall not he render to every man according to his works?* It is evident, from hence, that man is prone to excuſe himſelf from the labours of love; and that God notices and reſents the criminal neglect. May not this be the cauſe, that we have ſo often to complain, *Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed!* Allow me, however, to expreſs my aſſured expectation, that if we heartily engage in this good and great work, we ſhall not only be bleſſed with ſucceſs abroad, but with a revival of religion at home. That gracious Saviour, whoſe love and grace we publiſh beyond the ſeas, will teſtify his approbation, by pouring out his ſpirit in a larger meaſure upon us, and our churches. But I will not enlarge on theſe obſervations. The text ſuggeſts ſome other ideas, which demand a larger portion of our attention.

I cannot ſuppoſe that any ſecret infidel, any mere moraliſt, any lukewarm profeſſor, or any prieſtly hireling can enter into our views. A real friend to miſſions, muſt *know* the Goſpel, and *love* it. His underſtanding muſt be enlightened with its heavenly truths; he muſt feel its energy within, as the power of God to his own ſalvation, and his heart muſt glow with the ardors of the love of Chriſt. Give me leave then, ere I lay before you the deplorable ſtate of the heathen, or try to excite your exertions in their favour, to call to your recollection, the admirable glories, the infinite excellencies,

cellencies, the everlaſting bleſſings of the goſpel of Chriſt: and if, indeed, we can ſo diſcern and enjoy theſe, as to be duly ſenſible of our diſtinguiſhed happineſs, we ſhall not dare to withhold the bleſſing from our fellow men.

*Ariſe, go unto Nineveh, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee—the preaching that I bid thee*; and what was that? *Cry againſt it*—Denounce the divine anger kindled by their accumulated ſins: accordingly this was the ſubſtance of his preaching, when he actually reached the place. *Yet forty days and Nineveh ſhall be overthrown.* Heavy tidings theſe! an awful meſſage! But my brethren, what is the preaching that God bids his miniſters preach to all nations. It is *the Goſpel. The Goſpel of God. The Goſpel of Chriſt. The Goſpel of Salvation. The glorious Goſpel. The everlaſting Goſpel.* Theſe are its ſcriptural titles. Theſe point out its excellency. Theſe unite to recommend it to us. Theſe call upon us to recommend it to all the world.

*This Goſpel alone diſplays the divine perfections.* "Here the *whole* Deity is known." Without the Goſpel, on every altar muſt be inſcribed, as on that at *Athens, To the unknown God.* But here, *Holineſs* beams forth in all its purity. Here *Juſtice* blazes in all its dreadful majeſty. Here *Truth* appears inviolate and eternal. Here *Love* opens its boundleſs and undiminiſhed ſtores. Here *Wiſdom* ſhines in all its manifold directions. Here Almighty *Power* diſcovers itſelf more magnificently than in the firſt creation. O what a glorious God is that of the Goſpel!

This Goſpel, my friends, claims univerſal regard, for *this alone affords to ſinners ſolid and certain hope of pardon and acceptance with an offended God.* Broken and mangled fragments of Goſpel hope, may be diſcerned among the rubbiſh of ancient mythology, and in the religious rites of the moſt barbarous nations. Sacrifices, of ſome ſort, have been generally offered;

offered;—and the ſtill prevailing cuſtom of human ſacrifices in the South ſea Iſlands, ſhews that their expectation of pardon is by blood. God grant that we may ſoon have opportunity to improve upon their miſtaken traditions, and to ſay, *Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the ſin of the world.* Hence it was, that St Paul gloried in the goſpel, becauſe it was "a miniſtration of righteouſneſs," becauſe "therein is the righteouſneſs of God by "faith, revealed for belief†."

Remember, chriſtians, *That this Goſpel is the grand, the only inſtrument of Sanctification and Holineſs.* Take a view of human depravity. "The whole "head is ſick, the whole heart is faint;" "from "head to foot, all is wounds and bruiſes, and pu-"trifying ſores." The whole world is a horrid maſs of moral corruption. And who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? What Hercules can purge this Augean ſtable? It is beyond the power of man. Great men, great philoſophers, have tried their ſkill in vain. "Sanctify them through thy "truth, thy word is truth." The Goſpel is the Catholicon, the univerſal remedy for the diſeaſe of ſin. In all countries the human heart is equally depraved, and from this ſource flow the horrid impieties and outrages of mankind. Hence Drunkenneſs, Whoredom, War, Murder, and all the liſt of human abominations: And in every country, where the ſtreams of the ſanctuary have reached, ſome have been healed. The ſanctifying Spirit of grace is the ſame in his operations in Europe, in Aſia, in Africa, and America. The poliſhed courtier in Britain, and the African ſlave, groaning under his burden, alike experience his healing power.

Let *Humanity* join the chriſtian in celebrating the praiſe of the Goſpel. The Goſpel civilizes as

† See Hawei's Tranſlation of the New Teſtament.

well

well as ſaves. This Goſpel aboliſhed the inhuman games and gladiatorial ſhews, celebrated by the Romans, in which, horrid to relate! from ten to twenty thouſand in a month, are ſaid to have loſt their lives. The barbarous cuſtom of murdering ſlaves to honor the funerals of their maſters, ceaſed before its benign influence. This Goſpel has called wandering tribes of American Indians to ſocial life. This Goſpel will, we truſt, put a period to the cruel penances endured by Eaſtern Bramins, and their deluded votaries; and the ſtill more dreadful uſage of burning women with the dead bodies of their huſbands.

See human nature languiſhing under innumerable evils---Sickneſs, Poverty, Oppreſſion---

> This is the balm for every wound,
> A cordial for its fears.

The Chriſtian knows where to find a refuge in every trial; he learns patience from a ſuffering Saviour, can ſmile in tribulation, and triumph in death. In the immediate proſpect of diſſolution, he looks forward with inexpreſſible joy to an everlaſting inheritance, and to a Redeemer ready to welcome his ſoul to manſions of bleſſedneſs. This, my friends, this is the Goſpel, which you enjoy in Britain. Bleſſed be God for it! The Lord teach us to prize it as we ought; and knowing this truly "joyful ſound," may we continually "walk in the "light of his countenance!"

But let us ſtop a moment and aſk--Does every fellow creature enjoy this bleſſing? Is Jeſus, the Saviour of the world, preached to every creature? Ah! no--not to one half of the human race. If there be eight hundred millions of men on earth, five hundred millions, at leaſt, of theſe, know nothing of his precious name.

*Ariſe, go to Nineveh that great city, and preach,* &c. it was *a great city---an exceeding great city---a city of three days journey.*

The compaſſionate Father of men mentions the *greatneſs* of that populous city, as an inducement to the Prophet to preach there; and when he peeviſhly repined at the Lord's mercy towards the people, in revoking his ſentence againſt them, the Lord reproved him in theſe words: *Doeſt thou well to be angry for the gourd? Thou haſt had pity on the gourd, for the which thou haſt not laboured, neither madeſt it grow: which came up in a night, and periſhed in a night. And ſhould not I ſpare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are ſix ſcore thouſand perſons, that cannot diſcern between their right hand and their left hand?* (Chap 4, 9, &c.)

It is generally accounted one of the greateſt myſteries in the conduct of divine providence, that this glorious Goſpel, ſo honourable to God, and ſo beneficial to man, ſhould not have had an univerſal ſpread. Great ſucceſs attended the firſt promulgation of it at Jeruſalem. Many thouſands embraced it in a few days. By the diſperſion of the diſciples, it was ſpread on every ſide. In the courſe of ſixty years, an individual Apoſtle, had fully preached it in all the countries, from "Jeruſalem to Illyricum." In about three hundred years, the Roman Empire became Chriſtian. In ſucceeding ages, it gained ground in Perſia, Ethiopia, Hungary, Scotland, Ireland, and England. A long night of papal darkneſs ſucceeded, and what was then called the Goſpel, adulterated as it was with innumerable errors and ſuperſtitions, would have been ſcarcely worthy of the acceptance of the Heathen. When the Reformation reſtored to a part of Chriſtendom the beauties and bleſſings of Goſpel truth, one might have expected that the whole Proteſtant Church would have burned with zeal to diffuſe the knowledge of Chriſt. But alas! little, comparatively, has been done: We muſt except America. The Puritans carried with them real purity of doctrine and diſcipline; they fled from Proteſtant perſecution

ſecution for the ſake of Chriſt, and preferred a waſte and howling wilderneſs, with religious liberty, to all the accommodations of bigotted Britain. Bleſſed be God, there are millions of perſons called by the name of Chriſt in North America; nor have they been wholly wanting in attempts to convert the Indians; though little progreſs has been made in that great work.

The diſcoveries of Cook, and other celebrated navigators, have lately opened to our view, a new world, equal perhaps in population to America itſelf—Cluſters of inhabited iſlands, ſcattered throughout the vaſt Pacific Ocean, and all theſe inhabited by poor benighted Pagans.

Thoſe who are acquainted with the ſtate of the world, need not be informed, that the heathen tribes, are in general, ſhockingly uncivilized. I have a view more particularly to the inhabitants of the South Sea Iſlands. Some of their cuſtoms are far too indelicate to be rehearſed in a Chriſtian audience. On the coaſt of Terra del Fuego, they are elevated but a ſmall degree above the very brutes. Ought we not to pity fellow-men ſo degraded in the ſcale of ſociety; and knowing the vaſt advantages of a civilized ſtate, endeavour to civilize, may I not ſay, to *humanize* them?

Where ignorance ſo awfully prevails, is it any wonder that men are extremely wicked? Drunkenneſs is dreadfully prevalent among ſome. Laſciviouſneſs is the reigning vice of others. Theft is almoſt univerſal among the inhabitants of the South Sea Iſlands. Cruel revenge and bloody murders are too frequent. Who can read without horror, the account of the death of Captain Furneaux's people, or the ſlaughter of the famous, but unhappy Captain Cook? It is a fact, but too well eſtabliſhed, that the inhabitants of New Zealand, who are frequently at war, neither give quarter, nor take priſoners,

ſoners, but are abſolutely canibals, and feaſt on the fleſh of their ſlaughtered enemies.

Their ſuperſtitions are alſo very affecting to a pious mind. How ſtrange, how abſurd, are their ideas of a Divine being! Who can enumerate the multiplied gods of the Heathen? What has reaſon, with all its boaſted powers, effected for man with regard to divine worſhip? Natural religion has not much to be proud of, when we reflect, that Greeks and Romans, poliſhed as they were---"*became vain in* "*their imagination, and their fooliſh heart was darkened.* "*Profeſſing themſelves to be wiſe, they became fools: and* "*changed the glory of the uncorruptible God, into an image* "*made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-* "*footed beaſts, and creeping things.*" Indeed, the Devil is the chief object of Pagan worſhip; for every object of worſhip, who is not the true God, is ſet up in oppoſition to him. And O how long has he triumphed over the children of men! Some of the Heathen rites are acts of abominable luſt, and others of ſavage cruelty. The Deities themſelves were examples and patrons of vice, and the moſt filthy and abominable deeds were committed under the notion of conſecrated acts, acceptable to their gods, and beneficial to their ſouls. Human ſacrifices, as before obſerved, are ſtill common in the South Sea Iſlands: when a king is going to war with another Iſland, he invokes his Eatooa to ſucceed his bloody deſigns: he ſends ſome of his ſervants privately to murder one or more of his ſubjects. The unhappy victim is called Taata taboo, or the conſecrated man; he is preſented at the Morai, to their god, who is ſuppoſed to feed with much delight upon the ſacrifice. Ten ſuch wretched victims were preſented on a ſingle occaſion; and no leſs than forty-nine ſkulls were found at a Morai, which, not being much altered by the weather, were ſuppoſed to have been collected in a ſhort time.

In

In other parts of the world, incredible tortures are endured on a religious account; whether as a penance enjoined to expiate crime, or as the means of attaining higher degrees of perfection, by a greater abſtraction of mind, and mortification of the animal nature. "Some are hung up forty feet "high in the air, by fleſh hooks faſtened in their "backs, and thus ſwung and whirled round for a "conſiderable time. Others have threads, thirty "yards long, paſſed through both their ſides, in "ſix different places, the ends being faſtened, while "they dance backward and forward as in a rope-"walk. Others paſs a ſpit four feet long through "their tongue, drawing it backwards and forwards. "Others have fixed themſelves in a certain poſi-"tion, for ſeveral years, expoſed to the extremes "of heat and cold."

O Sirs! can you hear theſe things, without longing to go, or ſend to them, and to tell them of Jeſus Chriſt, that he is able and willing to ſave them, "without money, without price," without torture? That *his yoke*, altogether contrary to the Devil's, *is eaſy*, that *his burden is light*, and that *none of his commandments are grievous?* It is a pleaſing anecdote which was related to Mr. Thomas, at Calcutta, reſpecting one of the Malabarian Miſſionaries*:

"A certain man on the Malabar Coaſt, had "enquired of various devotees and prieſts, how he "might make atonement for his ſin; he was di-"rected to drive iron ſpikes, ſomewhat blunted, "through his ſandals, and on theſe he was to "place his naked feet, and walk (if I miſtake not) "250 coſs, or 480 miles; if through loſs of blood, "or weakneſs of body, he was forced to halt, he

* See Periodical Accounts of the Baptiſt Miſſionary Society, (No. 1,) page 28, &c.

"might

" might wait for healing and ſtrength: he under-
" took the journey, and while he halted under a
" large ſhady tree, where the goſpel was ſometimes
" preached, one of the Miſſionaries came, and
" preached from theſe words—*The blood of Jeſus*
" *Chriſt cleanſeth from all ſin.* While he was preach-
" ing, the poor man roſe up, threw off his torturing
" ſandals, and cried aloud—This is what I want;
" and he became a lively witneſs, that the blood of
" Jeſus Chriſt, does indeed cleanſe from all ſin."

Who can tell, till a trial be made, how many wretched men may be found, labouring under fearful apprehenſions of divine wrath, and trying in vain, by the ſuperſtitions of their country to obtain peace, who would gladly liſten to goſpel miniſters, — *Preaching peace by Jeſus Chriſt. He is Lord of all!*

" Ariſe then, go to Nineveh, that *great* city:" See millions of men immerſed in ignorance, wickedneſs, and ſuperſtition, ready to periſh. Their ſouls are of equal value with ours. They muſt exiſt for ever in happineſs or woe. At preſent, their ſtate is awful beyond deſcription. *The wages of ſin is death*, not in England only, but every where. Theſe unhappy perſons have no written law—but *they ſhew the work of the law written in their hearts:* they are ſinners againſt that law, and we are aſſured by St. Paul, that *as many as have ſinned without law, ſhall alſo periſh without law*, (Rom. ii. 12, 15.) We do not believe, nor dare we aſſert, that their ſalvation is impoſſible; but admitting their ſalvation poſſible, is there not reaſon to fear that the greater part periſh in their ſins? if we are really believers, we muſt take our eſtimate of theſe matters from the ſacred word, and thence we learn that the heathen *ſit in the region and ſhadow of death*, (Matt. iv. 16,) that they are blind; that they are in darkneſs; that they are in Satan's kingdom; that he works in their hearts, and leads them captive at his will; that they are

without God, without Chriſt, without hope; in a word, *children of wrath.* Is this their condition? and ſuch it ſurely is, for ſo the God of truth declares it to be, and ſhall we not from our hearts pity them, and unite all our ſtrength in making ſome generous and bold efforts for their relief? Suppoſing the ſalvation of the Heathen poſſible without the Goſpel, yet would the Goſpel be of no advantage to them? Would it be no advantage or pleaſure, to know *that* Jeſus, to whom all ſalvation muſt be aſcribed—to know the nature and perfections of the only true God; to be delivered from devils and devil-worſhip, and from all their horrid and painful ſuperſtitions? Would it be no advantage to them to know the whole will of God, the doctrines of truth, the hiſtory of the creation, the fall of man, the method of reſtoration by Jeſus; his wonderful incarnation, his holy life, his miracles of mercy, his love to ſinners; the account of that death by which we live; his reſurrection, aſcenſion, and glory; together with the whole work of the Spirit, and the hiſtory of the church? It is impoſſible, that any one, who underſtands, believes, and loves his bible, ſhould not be deſirous, that the light of truth may become univerſal, like the light of the ſun, and that the glorious doctrines of grace ſhould be known by every rational being. To neglect the converſion of Pagans, on the ſuppoſition of their ſalvation without knowing the Goſpel, would be as abſurd as to ſay, that as Engliſhmen may be ſaved without learning to read or write, therefore thoſe accompliſhments are of no uſe; or to affirm, that becauſe a man may ſubſiſt on bread and water, other ſorts of aliment are quite unneceſſary; or becauſe a man may enjoy his health in ſlavery, therefore liberty is of no value.

A word of exhortation, ſhall cloſe my diſcourſe.

Hitherto, the chriſtian world in general, like the ten virgins in the parable, has ſlumbered and ſlept.

ſlept. It is high time to awake out of this ſleep, and by ten-fold diligence make amends, in ſome meaſure, for the long neglect. Should we hereafter ſucceed in preaching to the Heathen,--when they ſhall have taſted that the Lord is gracious, may we not expect they will aſk us, Why did you not bring us the Goſpel before? It was known for many hundred years in your favoured iſland; thouſands, you tell us, lived and died happy in the knowledge of it; why then did you keep it from us, while, here, ſucceſſive generations were periſhing in ſin? What anſwer, my friends, could we give to ſuch a cutting queſtion?

I am well aware that various objections will be ſtarted, both by friends and foes, to our preſent attempt. It is right that they ſhould be attended to; and I have the pleaſure to inform you, that one of the ſucceeding ſermons will be chiefly devoted to this purpoſe, and I have no doubt that the moſt formidable objections will then be fairly ſtated, and fully removed.

By entering with our whole hearts into this great work, I think we ſhall prove our love to Jeſus Chriſt. Does loyalty and love to an earthly prince require that we ſhould endeavour to ſupport and extend his dominions; and ſhall not we, the ſworn ſubjects and ſoldiers of the King of Kings, go forth to ſpread the conqueſts of his word, and extend the limits of his empire? Why ſhould the foe of God and men boaſt that more than half the globe is his? Let us go forth then, though armed like David with a ſling and a ſtone, againſt the Goliah of hell; and ſhall we not prove victorious like him?

We dream not of miſſions without difficulties. Indeed they are many, and, in ſome points of view, formidable. But the ſucceſs of our predeceſſors, under various diſadvantages which we hope to avoid, has been very conſiderable. Difficulties may

may be great, but they are not inſuperable "Prayers and pains, through faith in Jeſus Chriſt, "will do any thing," ſo ſaid the Apoſtolic *Elliot*, when, with incredible pains, he had finiſhed his Indian grammar. That great and good man had the unſpeakable pleaſure to ſee a church of Indians ſoon formed at *Natick*, and afterwards ſeveral more in other places. *Brainerd*, in his ſolitary miſſion, and under diſadvantages which might have been prevented, was the honoured inſtrument of converting great numbers. The *Mayhews*, father and ſons, were the ſpiritual fathers of 1500 in Martha's Vineyard. The Daniſh miſſionaries on the coaſt of Coromandel are ſaid, ſince the year 1706, to have brought 18,000 Gentoos to the profeſſion of chriſtianity. The Moravian brethren, by labours unparalelled in their firmneſs and perſeverance, have been owned for the converſion of vaſt multitudes in Greenland, in the Weſt Indies, in America, and among the Hottentots. In the year 1788 they had in their ſocieties nearly 15,000 converted heathen.

Is not this ſufficient encouragement? Delightful thought! To ſnatch ſinners as brands from the burning. To reſcue immortals from the power of the devil. To advance the kingdom of our glorious Jeſus. How would you feel, to hear a company of converted ſavages uniting with heart and voice in that ſweet hymn,

"Jeſus, I love thy charming name."

Such a pleaſure did ſome of our chriſtian brethren enjoy at Nazareth in Penſylvania. At leaſt we may hope to *hear* of ſuch a bleſſed event; yes, and we may hope to meet redeemed Pagans before the throne, there reap the fruit of our preſent labours, and join with them in the praiſes of Jeſus.

My brethren, the honour of the chriſtian name requires ſome exertions at our hands--I bluſh for my country, when I reflect, that the peculiar impiety and unbridled luſts of Engliſhmen, have left a ſtain on the chriſtian religion, wherever they have

reſided. O cruel Britain, not content with the honour of diſcovery and the gain of commerce, thou haſt, with a chriſtian name, communicated vice and diſeaſe to the poor helpleſs Pagan Iſlanders! Chriſtians! if you deſerve that honourable appellation, for Chriſt's ſake, endeavour to retrieve the forfeited glory of our religion, and let theſe abuſed people know that our Saviour came *not to deſtroy men's lives but to ſave them*,--to ſave them *from their ſins*, not to promote their dreadful reign.

What a cutting reproach was lately conveyed to our country by a letter from the Eaſt Indies, written by ſome perſons lately converted to chriſtianity. "O great Sir, though we thought that many nations had many kinds of *Shaſters*, (or holy laws) "yet in the country of the Engliſh we thought "there was no Shaſter at all: for, concerning ſin and holineſs, thoſe that are here have "no judgment at all. We have even thought that "they were not men, but a kind of other creatures "like devourers†."

It has been objected to the truth of chriſtianity, that it is ſo partially eſtabliſhed in the world. "If, "ſay the infidels, it were of God, how is it that "the larger part of the globe is, after 1700 years, "confeſſedly deſtitute of the Goſpel?" I deeply feel the ſevere reproach, for a reproach it is. But on whom? On the bleſſed and benevolent author of our religion? No, it cannot belong to him, for he ſtraitly charged his diſciples to *Go into all the world--to all nations, and publiſh his Goſpel to every creature.* Shall we then calmly reſolve our ſinful negligence into the divine decree. God forbid! I reverence, I adore the divine decree, as much as any man in the world; But the partial diſtribution of the Goſpel is to be aſcribed to the cold, the cruel, the criminal neglect of chriſtians; their want of love to God and man. Let us rouze ourſelves

† Periodical Account of the Baptiſts, No. i. page 32.

from

from this wicked indifference, and by our utmoſt exertions try to remove this fatal ſtumbling block out of the way.

We may reaſonably hope, that beſides the ſucceſs which we truſt will crown our efforts abroad, no ſmall advantage will accrue to us at home. God has ſaid, and I believe it,--Pray ye for the peace, or proſperity, of the church, they ſhall proſper that love her. A pious friend of another denomination thus expreſſes himſelf in a letter to me on this ſubject.

"Had I no hope of ſucceſs attending future "efforts among the Heathen, yet I could not but "rejoice in the effects which I am perſuaded will "attend the preſent exertions at home. In propor- "tion as chriſtians enter into the real ſpirit of miſ- "ſions, ſo will their perſonal piety be promoted. "They muſt neceſſarily think much on the ſubject: "and habitual reflection on a ſubject ſo intimately "connected with the croſs of Chriſt, and the beſt in- "tereſts of man, will, if I may ſo expreſs it, engender "a habit of pious meditation, which will prove a "happy mean of growth in grace, and a preſſing "on towards perfection. To enter heartily into "a miſſion, will undoubtedly promote the expan- "ſion of the mind. Selfiſhneſs will be expelled, "great and generous thoughts, deſires and reſo- "lutions will follow, and the man will acquire "a public ſpiritedneſs of feeling, to which before "he was totally inſenſible. Nor can I claſs it "among the leaſt advantages which will reſult "from the preſent emulation among chriſtians of "different names, to diſtinguiſh themſelves by their "efforts to evangelize the Pagan world, that a "more free and affectionate intercourſe will be "opened among miniſters and others in England, "who being ſeparated in ſituation and denomina- "tion were hardly known to each other before. "Now one common cauſe unites us all: we ſee, "we feel, that whatever hard thoughts we pre-

"viouſly

" viouſly indulged, the honour of Chriſt, and the " happineſs of ſouls prevails over every other feel- " ing in our brother's boſom, as well as in our own. " To mark this temper muſt be to love its owner. " Love will promote intercourſe, and intercourſe " in its turn ſtrengthen love. Party ſpirit, abaſh- " ed, will hide its head, and ſo the unity of the " ſpirit be preſerved in peace. Jealouſies, invective, " inſinuations, ſneers and bigotry will be baniſhed " from the churches; and thus the way will be pre- " pared for the watchmen's ſeeing eye to eye, and " the Lord's name becoming *one* over all the " earth."

To conclude, humbly hoping, that what has been ſaid will contribute to the furtherance of our deſign, I cannot finiſh without recommending it to your *inceſſant and earneſt prayer*. I am well aware, that however wiſely we may lay our plan, however vigorouſly we may purſue it, nothing effectual will be done without the Lord's bleſſing. Let us humbly acknowledge this to-day, leſt through our forgetfulneſs of God, we learn it hereafter by painful experience. I mention this, leſt, through the eagerneſs of our zeal, we ſhould fondly dream of ſucceſs, without an entire dependance on " power from on high." In primitive times miſſions were undertaken with faſting and prayer. Pray then, that the Lord would direct, as to what part of the world we ſhould ſend miſſionaries. Pray, that truly wiſe and good men may be thruſt forth into the harveſt. Pray, that the Directors of the Society, may be vigilant and laborious, committing themſelves to the work, as if they were born to accompliſh that alone. Thus, my friends, may we hope, that a buſineſs begun with earneſt prayer, will be proſecuted with ſucceſs, and be productive of ſalvation to ſouls, and glory to God. To that God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, be glory, in all the Churches, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

# A MISSION TO THE HEATHEN,

## FOUNDED UPON THE MORAL LAW.

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## SERMON III.

DELIVERED AT HABERDASHER'S HALL MEETING HOUSE, IN THE FORENOON OF SEPTEMBER 23, 1795,

BY SAMUEL GREATHEED,

OF WOBURN, BEDFORDSHIRE.

MEN, BRETHREN, AND FATHERS.

IT is not without a ſacrifice of my feelings, that I attempt an engagement, which ſo many, now preſent, might have fulfilled, in a far more ſuitable and uſeful manner. The Gentlemen of the Committee, who arranged meaſures preparative for theſe ſolemn aſſemblies, and with whom I have had the honour in ſome inſtances to act, well know, that in my appointment to this part of the work neither my inclination nor my judgment was conſulted. But, in whatever relates to a MISSION, it ill becomes any individual to have a will or an opinion of his own. And I do not heſitate to declare, that, high as this auditory ſtands in my eſteem, your *mere approbation* ſeems to me, at this moment, a matter light as air. I am conſcious of ſtanding before a ſuperior tribunal, which occupies my thoughts and engroſſes my concern. May Jeſus Chriſt, the judge of all, approve and proſper the attempt, however feeble, to *your* ſalvation, and to that of *others* by *your* means!

You are already poſſeſſed of the *outlines* of our ſubject; and the excellencies of the *Goſpel* which we exhort you to ſend to heathen nations, with the *wretched circumſtances* of theſe countleſs millions of your fellow creatures, are *parts* of the ſubject which have been entered upon, in a maſterly and pathetic manner, by perſons as ſuperior to myſelf in ſpiritual attainments, as in the ſtores of knowledge and in the powers of perſuaſion. You are, I doubt not, well informed in your judgments, and deeply impreſſed in your affections, by what you have already

ready heard. But they who are to conduct at home the important affairs of a miſſion, as well as thoſe who purſue its glorious aims, in diſtant regions, have need to act upon ſomething more than a ſyſtem, however juſt and beautiful; upon ſomething more than the emotions of the heart, however properly and powerfully excited. The principle which actuates *you*, ſhould be immoveable, whatever difficulty, delay, diſcouragement, or diſappointment, may aſſail it. I know of none more applicable, or more adequate to this purpoſe, than the *plain command* and *immutable authority* of the *moral law* of God.

Conſcious of the impoſſibility of doing juſtice to ſuch a ſubject, but hoping both for your candid attention, and for divine aſſiſtance through your prayers, I ſhall endeavour to ſuggeſt ſome conſiderations reſulting from the enquiry, addreſſed to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt by a teacher of the Jewiſh law, which you may find recorded in

LUKE X. 29.

*"And who is my Neighbour?"*

The ſpirit and deſign of this queſtion were not good. It is therefore to be lamented that they are not uncommon. Among perſons who underſtand and profeſs the Goſpel, its practical influence and effects are too often notoriouſly deficient; and perhaps no excuſe is ſo readily or generally admitted, by conſciences that are more enlightened than ſanctified, as the difficulty of deciding upon the *proper objects* towards whom the precepts of chriſtianity are to be performed. No one diſputes the duty of *charity*; but how many allow themſelves in the neglect of it, whilſt they ſay, "Who "will ſhew us proper objects of charity?" Numerous and important are the exhortations in the New Teſtament to *brotherly love* among believers; but how rare the fulfillment of them, through the ſpecious

ſpecious plea, "who are my brethren?" So the Jewiſh Teacher in the text, charged by his own conſcience with having not obeyed the law which he inculcated on others, "thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf," attempts to juſtify himſelf by this queſtion, "*Who is* my *neighbour*?"

The more nearly we can look into the hearts of our fellows, the more we may diſcover their reſemblance to our own. The picture, which the text preſents to us, may probably remind us of *other* failures in duty, beſides thoſe, of which I truſt we have moſtly, now, began to entertain ſome conviction, relative to *Heathens*. Far be it from me to direct your attention to them *alone*; or to ſet your duty towards them at variance with your duty towards thoſe who are related to you, not only as fellow children of Adam, but as your intimates, or nearer kindred. Yet, whilſt much love ſhould be ſhewn to theſe, is *none* to be expreſſed towards Heathens? How awful will our paſt inattention to them appear, if it proves to have always been our duty, "to *love them as ourſelves!*"

In conſidering *the dependence which our more immediate object*, that of a miſſion to idolatrous and unenlightened nations, *has upon the moral law*, it ſeems neceſſary to notice ſomewhat diſtinctly, the PRINCIPLE we are to adopt, the EXTENT in which it is to be applied, and the EXERCISE of it that is called for by the preſent occaſion.

The *principle*, to be adopted in our conduct towards our neighbour, is couched in one ſhort word, LOVE! I believe it to be the moſt comprehenſive term that language can ſupply. It appears to me no *Hyperbole*, to aſſert that it expreſſes more than the whole univerſe contains; for the Apoſtle John declares that "GOD IS LOVE." It is, therefore, not ſtrange, that we find the *whole duty* of Man, both to his neighbour, and to God himſelf, compriſed in the ſame word; for, to *what* can man aſpire beyond a reſemblance of God? The ſpeaker

in the text had been enquiring of Chriſt what he ſhould do to inherit eternal life. It was an important queſtion, and ſeems to have been propoſed in a reſpectful manner. But the aim of the enquirer was not the improvement of his own knowledge, but to make trial of the knowledge of Jeſus.—Do *we* ever attend on preachers with no higher view? It is dreadful to trifle with the doctrine of eternal life!—Our Lord always knows what is in man; and he came not on earth to anſwer curious queſtions. He therefore refers the Jewiſh Doctor to the writings of Moſes, which he profeſſed to ſtudy, and which he was accuſtomed to read to others in the ſynagogues. "What is written in the *law?* How "readeſt thou!"—We ſhould make uſe of the knowledge we have acquired, if we profeſs a wiſh to increaſe it.—The lawyer's anſwer was ſuch as our Lord approved; and, upon another occaſion, himſelf adopted, as the ſubſtance of "all the law and "the prophets*." It was ſelected from two detached parts of the Pentateuch†, but we are told that both were daily read in the Jewiſh liturgy. "Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy "heart, and with all thy ſoul, and with all thy "ſtrength, and with all thy mind;—and thy neigh-"bour as thyſelf."—My friends, can we read theſe precepts; and remember, without trembling, that he, "who continueth not in all things commanded "in the law to do them, is accurſed?"—Bleſſed be Jeſus who bore the curſe in our ſtead! From his lips we now receive this law; not as the condition of everlaſting life, but as the holy, juſt, and perfect rule of conduct, to the obedience of which we are laid under tenfold obligation by his redeeming ove!

* Matthew xxii. 40.

† Deuteronomy vi. 5. and Leviticus xix. 18.

From

From this ſummary of the moral law you ſee that the principle on which we are to act towards God and man is that of *Love*. It is true that with regard to God, expreſſions are accumulated, and language is exhauſted, to deſcribe what is due from us. Still *Love* fulfills the law: but to GOD it ſhould be perfect, it muſt be ſupreme; conſequently it muſt be limited and ſubordinate towards *fellow creatures*. Religion and Morality, ſo far from being oppoſite, or even independent principles, are the very ſame; but they are directed to different objects, and in different meaſures. *Religion* is the love of God. *Morality*, the love of mankind; or, as the original ſcripture, when aſcribing it to God our Saviour*, expreſſes it in one word, PHILANTHROPY.

If we, my friends, have any real love towards GOD--and, without it, what are we but incarnate fiends?--it is *unlimited*. It will admit of no compariſon with other attachments, much leſs of any reſtriction or controul from them. When "the word and the covenant of God" require it, we muſt imitate Levi, "who ſaid unto his father and his mother, I have not ſeen them; who acknowedged not his brethren, and knew not his own children †." It peculiarly behoves a *Miſſionary* to remember the declaration of our Lord; "If any man come to "me, and hate not his father, and mother, and "wife, and children, and brethren, and ſiſters; "yea, and his own life alſo, he cannot be my "diſciple ‡." To love the creature more than the creator, is the worſt idolatry. It is that, not of the poſture or the ſpeech, but of the *heart*; which God claims as his own excluſive right, and without which no gift or ſervice can be fit for his accept-

* Titus iii. 4. ἡ φιλάνθρωπία ἐπεφάνη τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν θεοῦ.

† Deuteronomy xxxiii. 9. ‡ Luke xiv. 26.

ance-

ance. Yet to this enormous ſin we are univerſally and continually prone; and we have need, in our love to fellow-creatures, to guard againſt erring on the right hand, as well as on the left. The only path, in which we can walk with ſafety, is that of the law of God. He has given a plain and perfect rule, for the *degree*, as well as for the nature, of our principle of duty, in ſaying, "Thou ſhalt love "thy neighbour AS THYSELF." To exceed, therefore, or to come ſhort of an equal regard for the ſoul, the body, the poſſeſſions, the intereſts, of our neighbour, as for our own, is alike to diſobey.

Such I conſider to be the *principle* which the law of God requires us to adopt reſpecting our neighbour. May his Holy Spirit cauſe it to be rooted and grounded in your hearts, that you may be fruitful in every good word and work! *Then*, I am confident, you will not conſider it as an unneceſſary, or unimportant matter, to ſend the word of Salvation to diſtant heathens. You will intereſt and exert yourſelves for this great object; you will cordially unite with thoſe who have the honour to recommend it to you; you will highly eſteem them for the work's ſake; and no future obſtacles, however arduous, diſpiriting, or weariſome, will prevent your ſtedfaſt perſeverance in the undertaking.

If you have willingly admitted the principle, that it is incumbent upon us, "to love our neigh-"bour as ourſelves;" I do not apprehend it will be difficult, in treating of its EXTENT, to convince you that it is *applicable to the whole human race.*

When it is ſaid, "Thou ſhalt love thy neigh-"bour as thyſelf," is it not evident that the affection required by the law of God is not a mere emotion of natural feelings, produced by accidental circumſtances, and dependent upon different degrees of conſtitutional ſenſibility?--It is alſo plainly diſtinct from that partial attachment, which is produced by the amiable and excellent qualities of ſome, in mind or perſon; or a ſimilarity of diſ

poſition, habits, or ſentiments, in others. If you are biaſſed, by the prejudices of a national or ſectarian partiality, to join with this Jewiſh teacher in the queſtion, "Who is my neighbour?"--attend to our Lord's reply. No weapon can be more completely adapted to demoliſh all the partition walls that human bigotry ever did, or ever can erect. It leaves not one ſtone of them ſtanding upon another; it raiſes their deepeſt foundations: and it is owing only to the want of its proper application, that the ground, which they have encumbered, has not been ſown with the ſeeds of peace and joy, and yielded an abundant harveſt to the glory of God, and the ſalvation of ſouls.

Had the love of our neighbour admitted, in *any* caſe, of limitation, by national or religious diſtinctions, the *Jews* might have been excuſable in reſtricting this duty to their own tribes. Deſcended from one father, and ſeparated by God himſelf, to preſerve his knowledge and his worſhip; forbidden to intermix with any of the idolatrous nations around them; and divinely appointed to be inſtrumental to the extirpation of ſome; what could be more natural than that *they* ſhould confine their philanthropy within the bounds of their own nation, and add to the law of love towards their neighbour, the traditionary ſanction of "hatred to "their enemy?" But our Lord commanded his diſciples, in contradiction to this favourite maxim, "Love your enemies, bleſs them who curſe you, "do good to them who hate you, and pray for "them who deſpitefully uſe you; that ye may be "the children of your father who is in heaven: "for he maketh his ſun to riſe on the evil and on "the good, and ſendeth rain on the juſt and on "the unjuſt *."

Our Lord replied to the Jewiſh Lawyers' queſtion in my text, in a manner perfectly agreeable to the

* Matthew v. 43, 45.

exhortation

exhortation he had given to his own diſciples. To render conviction more impreſſive, he couches the ſolution under a beautiful narrative, and draws the interpretation of it from the enquirer himſelf, in a confeſſion of the poſſibility that even a *Samaritan* might deſerve to be accounted the neighbour of a Jew. It is well known that the Samaritans, though in our Lord's time ſeemingly not addicted to idolatry, were, of all claſſes of people, the moſt odious to the Jews. We find repeated inſtances of their mutual enmity in the hiſtories of the Old and the New Teſtaments. When the remnant of the kingdom of Judah was permitted to return from captivity, and to rebuild the temple at Jeruſalem, the Monarch, whom God made his inſtrument for their reſtoration, aſſigned to them the tribute he had before received from their neighbours of Samaria; his predeceſſors having peopled that country with families collected from various parts of their dominions, after they had tranſported to diſtant countries the remains of the conquered kingdom of Iſrael. Hence the Samaritans ſtrove by fraud and force to prevent the re-eſtabliſhment of the Jews, and the new erection of their temple and their city. It was not likely that ſuch treatment would not be reſented; and a variety of circumſtances occurred to cheriſh and heighten their animoſity. This, however, was not the mind that was in Chriſt. In paſſing from Judea to Galilee he was obliged to croſs the country of Samaria *. We have a delightful account of his interview with a poor abandoned woman, and others of the inhabitants, who become the firſt fruits of the Gentile harveſt. Yet we find, that, in a farther attempt to do them good, in returning to Jeruſalem, he was repulſed, and denied accommodations in one

* John iv. 4. &c.

of

of their villages, when he had not where to lay his head. The fact is related in the chapter immediately preceding that of our text; and it more ſtrongly marks the philanthropy with which our Lord ſelects a good *Samaritan* for a pattern of compaſſion, and commands a Jewiſh teacher to "go "and do likewiſe."

This demonſtrates to us the extent in which we are to underſtand the *title* in our text. "Who is "my neighbour?" The *Engliſh* term in its derivation, as well as its common uſe, ſignifies one who *dwells nigh* to us: but the *original* word of the Old Teſtament, to which the queſtion refers, has much more latitude of meaning, and is ſometimes tranſlated, one's "friend," one's "fellow," or companion; and, often, "one another." In one place alſo our Lord adopts the moſt unlimited expreſſion, when inculcating the proper exerciſe of mutual and equal love. "Therefore all things whichſoever "ye would that MEN ſhould do to you, do ye even "ſo to them: for this is the law and the pro"phets *." The Hebrew term †, to which I alluded, is derived from the paſturage of flocks, and admoniſhes us to regard *all mankind* as "ſheep of "God's paſture;" equally depending on his power and goodneſs; and related, both to Him, and to each other, by a thouſand endearing ties. Could a Pagan Comedian ſay, "I am a man, and I "eſteem no human being as an alien ‡:" and ſhall *we*, to whom "there is one God, and one "Mediator between God and Men, the MAN "Chriſt Jeſus, who gave himſelf a ranſom for all, "to be teſtified in due time §"--ſhall *we* contract our regard to the narrow limits of our viſible hori-

* Matthew vii. 12. † רע from רעה.

‡ Homo ſum: humani nihil à me alienum puto.
Terenc. Heautontim.

§ 1 Timothy ii. 5, 6.

zon,

zon, or to the yet ſmaller circles of our ſeveral religious aſſemblies and habitations? No; ſince the adventurous wings of navigation have compaſſed all the globe, ſince they have aſſured us that the continents and iſlands at our antipodes are filled with fellow-men, it has become our duty to love *them* as ourſelves, to do to *them* what, in a like ſituation, we believe to be the greateſt good they could have done to *us*—to ſend them the Goſpel of Salvation. Alas! hitherto, how groſsly have we failed! What inattention have we not ſhewn to our national advantages for the moſt extenſive and important uſefulneſs! What inſenſibility have we not diſcovered of that diſtinguiſhed mercy which wafted the joyful ſound, at ſo early a period of Chriſtianity, to our remote and barbarous ſhores! May our immediate and unremitting exertions prove the ſincerity of our repentance; though they cannot repair the ſad effects of our paſt negligence, nor ought to annihilate our ſenſations of regret and ſhame!

The wiſhes of mankind, to diminiſh the number of thoſe, towards whom important duties are to be exerciſed, are indiſputably proved by their conduct; and ſometimes even acknowledged and defended. It is, indeed, for thoſe who deny the *duty* of doing good, but are ſtrangers to the *pleaſure* it yields, the only way to ſave themſelves the trouble. Eſpecially in a duty of ſuch magnitude, as that of exerciſing love to others *equally as to ourſelves*, it is not wonderful that the ſelfiſh, the covetous, and the indolent, leave no pretence untried, in order to reduce the multitude of claimants to the ſmalleſt poſſible extent. Nor will a perſon, who rejects the plain command of Chriſt reſpecting *all* men, be likely to ſatisfy himſelf with contracting the exerciſe of benevolence, till he concenters it wholly in his own ſordid intereſts; and ſtands, inſulated from mankind, within the impaſſable line, which his deceitful heart, in agreement with the malignant powers of hell, has drawn around him. *Where* would you limit

limit philanthropy? Is it to Chriſtendom? like Gideon's army of twenty thouſand*, the number of your neighbours is too many. Detach all nations but your own: Like *his* forces, when reduced by timidity, they are yet too numerous. You muſt ſtill thin their ranks by every poſſible diſtinction of civil or religious party; though the difference of ſentiment or practice be of no more importance than that of lifting up water to the mouth, or bowing down to drink it. Sorry I am, that a difference, no greater, has power to cut off Chriſtians from each others fellowſhip in the ordinances of Chriſt. But *ſo* contrary is the heart of man, even though partially renewed, to the nature and the tenor of the Goſpel!

I ſtand before you, my brethren, not without a ſenſe of my unfitneſs for the office, as an advocate for the whole human race. I plead that *all* may be admitted to the rights, or rather to the poſſeſſion of your neighbourly affection. I recommend to your compaſſion their wives, their little ones; nay, not a hoof ſhall be left behind†. I claim for them an *equal* love with what you ought to bear to thoſe moſt dear to you, with what you feel for your own-ſelves. This needs not, will not, cannot leſſen your love to any. Philanthropy can do more than the rays of the ſun; for not only, like them, it is undiminiſhed when ſhared by millions, but it can enlighten and warm both hemiſpheres at once. Whilſt you extend this love to the moſt remote and ſavage of mankind, it will have the happieſt influence on your daily conduct towards your families, your friends, and fellow Chriſtians. To none of theſe, individually, are you required to exerciſe a ſuperior love to that which you bear to *yourſelf*. You owe nothing to any one, but "to love another "as yourſelf." There are gradations in the affini-

* Judges vii. † Exodus x. 24, 26.

ties of life, but the duties of the higheſt are fulfilled by this alone. How tender, yet how ſtrong, are the bonds of duty to our *parents!* And ſtill there is a bond of higher obligation: for a man ſhall leave his father and his mother, to cleave to his *wife.* But when the Apoſtle inculcates, among the believers at Epheſus, a conduct worthy of the Goſpel in the conjugal ſtate*, he can require no more than that "every one in particular, ſhould ſo love his "wife, even as himſelf."

Whilſt, therefore, a variety of relations, in the world, and in the Church of Chriſt, call for different degrees of our attention in the exerciſe of mutual love; and whilſt the ſcriptures abound with exhortations to a ſuitable conduct; it is ſtill plain that what we owe to all is the ſame in principle; it is *love;* and that to all we owe it *as to ourſelves.* The differences that muſt and ſhould ſubſiſt, in our exerciſe of this principle, towards various individuals or claſſes among our fellow creatures, ſeem reducible to three heads; the ability, the opportunity, and the neceſſity, for a proportionate exerciſe of love to others as ourſelves. In each view, the Heathen have a claim to our practical regard. I proceed then, more particularly, to recommend to you the EXERCISE of this principle, as called for by the preſent occaſion.

Every command of Chriſt implies endowment with *ability* for the performance. With the principle of love to others as ourſelves, eſtabliſhed in our hearts by the ſpirit of God, we are to exerciſe it to the utmoſt ability which God beſtows. "If there "be firſt a willing mind, it is accepted according "to that a man hath, and not according to "that he hath not†." If our qualities of mind, our ſtrength of conſtitution, our ſituation in life, are ſuch as enable us to encounter the difficulties, that may be expected in preaching the Goſpel to

* Epheſians v. 33. † 2 Corinth. viii. 12.

the

the Heathen, the principle of love to them, as to ourſelves, requires that we ſhould be ready for the arduous undertaking. Where *this* ability is deficient, it becomes us to do *what we can* towards the object. Can our knowledge of the Goſpel, or of the world; our talents for inſtruction, or perſuaſion; our property, or our prayers; contribute to the bringing millions of our fellow creatures acquainted with the "only name under heaven "whereby men can have ſalvation?" Oh, let not any of us be found wanting according to the ability which God hath given! Whether we have received five talents, or one only, let us be diligent in the proper application. The widow's mite was even more acceptable than the rich man's abundance, for ſhe did more than others *in proportion* to her ability.

"As we have *opportunity*," ſaid the Apoſtle of the Gentiles, let us do good to all, eſpecially to them who are of the houſhold of "Faith*." To ſuch, if we act conſiſtently, as Chriſtians, we ſhall have *moſt* opportunity of doing good. From *them* our companions will be choſen. Their temporal wants will come moſt within our notice; and their ſpiritual trials will open peculiar channels for our benevolent aſſiſtance. But how ſtrange a comment would it be on ſuch a text, to argue that our philanthropy ſhould *not* be extended to others! How unlike God our Saviour, who "when we were "without ſtrength in due time died for the un-"godly†!" How unſuitable a diſpoſition in thoſe whom Jeſus came to ſeek and ſave, when loſt! An *opportunity* now preſents itſelf of doing good to diſtant Heathens. Surely, if you have the ſpirit that was in Jeſus, and in his ſervant Paul, you will eagerly avail yourſelves of the occaſion. I fear it can hardly be ſaid of us, as that Apoſtle wrote to the Philippians, "ye alſo *were* careful but ye lacked

* Gal. vi. 10. † Romans v. 6.

"oppor-

" opportunity.*" Had we been ſufficiently intent on doing good in this important manner, we ſhould probably have ſought and found an earlier opportunity. But *now* the faireſt, the moſt promiſing occaſion courts your regard. The pitying friend of ſinners ſtands at the door, and knocks. Oh! ſleepers, riſe and welcome him! Opportunity is furniſhed to thoſe who are ready, " for his name's ſake to go forth " to the Gentiles:" opportunity is furniſhed to us all, to " receive ſuch, that we may be fellow " helpers to the truth.†" *No* talent needs longer to be unemployed: here is room, here is a call for every one.

Do you wait for a ſtronger plea than thoſe of your ability and opportunity for doing good to the heathen? I hope better things concerning you. Yet a ſtronger, if required, is at hand. Conſider their *neceſſity* of your help! Who would not withhold, from the perſon deareſt to him on earth, the ſatisfaction of one meal amidſt daily abundance, to ſave a mere *ſtranger* from immediate death by famine! And are there thoſe who argue that the heathen ſhould be left to periſh for lack of knowledge, becauſe ſome corners of our own Iſland have not the Goſpel preached in what we eſteem purity! How many of our towns, and even villages, are feaſted to the full! How many alas, ſeem glutted with wholeſome doctrine, and evidently lothe it, as the ſatiated ſtomach does the honeycomb!

In *this metropolis*, might not one half the number of preachers, and places of worſhip, ſuffice for all who are diſpoſed to hear the Goſpel! Nothing is farther from my wiſh than to make you indifferent to the advancement of Chriſt's cauſe around your own abodes. The principle I have recommended, if exerciſed to the utmoſt of our ability and op-

* Philippians iv. 10. † 3 Epiſt. John 7. 8.

portunity,

portunity, will prompt us to much greater uſefulneſs then has yet been attempted in our own, as well as in heathen countries. And, give me leave to aſk, *who*, among thoſe that ſlight our preſent object, have made more exertions for ſpreading the Goſpel throughout England, than ſome who now diſcover the moſt ardent zeal for its extenſion to the heathen world: Beſides a ſociety has long been eſtabliſhed for the former purpoſe, and its preſent funds are anſwerable to its calls. And are the heathen to be denied the crumbs that fall neglected from our tables? Is *this* to love them as ourſelves?

The *neceſſity* I urge is that of the *Goſpel*, not of the ſovereign and *renewing grace* of the ſpirit of Chriſt. Of *that*, every one amongſt us is in as great neceſſity for our ſalvation as the moſt ſavage heathen. *That*, we pretend not to communicate to others. Happy is it for us if we poſſeſs it ourſelves! If ſo, we eſteem the *Goſpel* precious. We have found it to contain the only information that can ſatisfy our ſouls. Amidſt all the advantages we enjoy from civilized ſociety what ſhould we do without it? What then can the poor heathen do, who are deſtitute of the numerous and important benefits of this kind, which we enjoy? You have heard ſome of the miſeries which are produced by their infernal ſuperſtitions and uncontrouled depravity, deſcribed to you in very affecting terms dreadful as theſe have been repreſented to be, you cannot deny the probability of the facts, if you know the plague of your own hearts; or if you conſider the condition of the Gentiles, before the Goſpel was firſt preached among them, as it is related in the ſcriptures. If a doubt remains upon any of your minds about the awfully *neceſſitous* condition of heathens, examine carefully the laſt twelve verſes of the firſt chapter to the Romans. They paint in gloomy colours indeed, the moſt exact reſemblance of what man ever was, and ever

would be, without the genial influence of the word of God. They hold out to us a faithful mirror of our own natural face; and if we turn with horror from the loathſome image, let it be to reflect with the more lively gratitude, on what *we* owe to thoſe who firſt brought the Goſpel here; and to purſue, with more ſtedfaſtneſs and ardour, the meaſures, by which we may tranſmit this invaluable bleſſing to *others*, who ſtill remain "in darkneſs, and in the ſhadow of death."

To follow the example and directions of our Lord, we muſt ſeek out the moſt neceſſitous, as the *chief* objects of our attention. When reproached for aſſociating with the more deſpiſed, and even the more profligate among the Jews, "They who "are whole," ſaid he, "need not the phyſician, "but they who are *ſick*. I came not to call the "righteous, but *ſinners* to repentance*." "What "man of you, having an hundred ſheep, if he loſe "one of them, doth not leave the reſt, and go "after that which is *loſt*, until he find it."—And why? its *neceſſity* requires his ſearch. Why all that joy over the returning *prodigal*? Hear the glad father cry; "This my ſon was dead, and is alive "again; he was loſt, and is found† !"

The whole ſcriptures abound with delightful inſtances of God's peculiar regard to the moſt neceſſitous of his creatures; but no paſſage, perhaps, is better ſuited to connect this argument in behalf of wretched heathens, with thoſe which have preceded, than the beautiful narration, by which our Lord replied to the enquiry in my text. Much has been ſaid and written upon this pleaſing pattern of compaſſion to the miſerable; and the views, in which it has been exhibited, have varied, according to the authors, or preachers, aim and ſen-

* Mark ii. 17. † Luke xv.

timent.

timent. I mean to preſent it to you ſimply in that light which moſt ſtrongly reflects upon the immediate object of our attention.

In anſwer to the lawyer's queſtion; "and *who is* "my neighbour:" Jeſus ſaid, "A certain man "went down from Jeruſalem to Jericho, and fell "among thieves, which ſtripped him of his rai-"ment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving "him half dead."—Poor unhappy creature! was this to have been expected from *fellow men*? probably, alſo, of the ſeed of Abraham!—Yet whilſt we grieve, we cannot wonder. Ye ſhores of Africa! Ye realms of Indoſtan! hide forever thoſe ſtreams of human gore, that cry to heaven for vengeance on the repacious cruelty of chriſtians and of Engliſhmen! But what is the chriſtian, or the Britiſh name, to perſons who have no principle of *love* to fellow creatures? as well might this poor traveller have met a ravenous tyger, or a bear bereaved of her cubs, as men whoſe luſts and paſſions were unreſtrained by the fear of God, or the love of human kind.

Alas! what miſery has ſin occaſioned! Can its damage, in any degree, be repaired? As yet this ill-fated traveller is not wholly dead. He ſtill breathes; though with difficulty. Timely relief may, perhaps, avail. And, happily, it is approaching. "A certain *prieſt* came that way." How ſeaſonably is an inſtrument provided for the help of this languiſhing wretch! How *fit* an inſtrument, the Miniſter of God! How fair an *opportunity* is afforded to him of doing good! Can *neceſſity* ever plead more urgently than now?—Yet—is it poſſible?—he flies not to his help!—he turns away, and leaves the wretch to groan, and welter in his blood. But a Levite, alſo, another ſervant of God, comes to the ſpot; he looks at his helpleſs fainting fellow mortal; and he likewiſe paſſes by on the other ſide. What could be the intention of our Lord in adducing

ducing inſtances like theſe? Can we ſuppoſe that teachers of religion are of all mankind the moſt hard-hearted? Are we to conſider Miniſters as Monſters?--I dare not, I would not, make the inference; though I can make no other. Bleſſed be God for the numerous aſſembly preſent, of thoſe who preach, as well as of thoſe who hear the Goſpel! Yet, where are many *others?* Far be it from us to brand the greater part of pious clergymen, and orthodox Diſſenting Miniſters in this immenſe town, as the Prieſts and Levites of their day! Whether prejudice or prudence ſeparates them, as yet, from our aſſemblies, I truſt they will, upon mature reflection, either do us the pleaſure to unite with us, or the honour to follow us, as far as we are followers of Chriſt. If they do *neither*, we cannot but grieve for the honour of their Lord and ours. With their *reaſons* we have nothing to do. Whether good or bad, the *event* is the ſame. Doubtleſs the Prieſt and Levite had *their* reaſons for paſſing by on the other ſide; but we are not informed of them. We know not what their *feelings* were on the occaſion, or what *prayers* they might offer up that the Lord would ſuccour this miſerable object, in *his* way and time. We only know that *they* afforded not their help. They would have done it, had they loved their neighbour as themſelves. They had the ability, the opportunity was preſented, the neceſſity was obvious and affecting, but they had not the principle at heart. This, I truſt, is not the caſe with many of theſe, who, hitherto, have given us no encouragement, would it were ſo with none!

I cannot proceed without remarking how great a difference of *outward character* may ſubſiſt in perſons, who, notwithſtanding, act upon the very ſame principle. How widely diſtant, in the eyes of moſt men, muſt have been the characters of the Prieſt and the Levite, from thoſe of the banditti, who plundered and half murdered the poor traveller! Theſe Miniſters

niſters of religion would, probably, themſelves, on returning to Jeruſalem, enter the temple, and pray, each by himſelf, "God I thank thee that I am not "as the wretches who murdered the poor man I ſaw "expiring!" Yet do you think they would go home juſtified in God's ſight? It is plain they were as deſtitute of love to their neighbour, as the thieves and murderers themſelves. Let not us, my friends, content ourſelves with doing no *injury* to others. Love, indeed, "worketh no ill to his neighbour: "therefore love is the fulfilling of the law*;" of that law which prohibits injury. But if love is the reverſe of *hatred*, it is, alſo, eſſentially diſtinct from cold *indifference*: and a ſupine inattention to the *benefit* of fellow creatures is as abſolute a proof that we love not our neighbour as ourſelves, as if we were active to their detriment. Had the prieſt and Levite been actuated by a principle of philanthropy, they would as readily have availed themſelves of the opportunity, to relieve this unhappy traveller, as the thieves did, to enrich themſelves by his plunder. Their conduct proved them to be ſtrangers to the principle. God forbid that our own ſhould ſpeak a ſimilar language! We vainly ſuppoſe ourſelves to be effectually diſtinguiſhed from thoſe who have been inſtrumental in bringing heathen nations into a ſtate of wretchedneſs, if we make no exertion towards their relief.

But a more pleaſing ſcene waits our attention. At length a perſon comes, who "*has* compaſſion on "him that fell among the thieves." But *who* is he! A *Samaritan*! Can any good thing come from Samaria! It ſeems that, in this caſe, no good came from any other quarter. Perhaps, my friends, moſt of *us* are already ſtigmatiſed by ſome terms of contempt, either religious or political, by ſome of thoſe who do not chooſe to join us in this endeavour to do good. And the reſt of us may expect, at leaſt, to be called enthuſiaſts for our pains. No matter, if

* Rom. xiii. 10.

we, under God's bleſſing, can accompliſh, what others leave unattempted. And, if we fail, the *guilt* will not lie at our door, whatever *reproach* may be caſt upon us. We prefer the latter to the former.

This Samaritan loved his fellow creature as himſelf. The ſpirit of God had implanted this principle in his heart, and now the providence of God furniſhes him with an occaſion for its exerciſe, in leading him, we know not how, to travel the ſame road. Whatever his buſineſs at Jeruſalem, had been, his ſituation there muſt have been uncomfortable; for the Jews would certainly have no dealings with him. It ſeems, alſo, rather ſtrange, that he ſhould be on the way to Jericho; for it did not lead to his own country. Whatever was *his* object, God's deſign was evident; and he was ordained to fulfil it. He goes to the naked, bleeding, almoſt expiring Jew; pours healing balſam, and invigorating liquor into his gaping wounds; binds them up with care and tenderneſs; reſigns his own beaſt, for the ſupport of the feeble but reviving man; conveys him to a place of accommodation upon the road; nurſes him whilſt he can ſtay, and leaves a ſtrict charge for his proper attendance, when about to depart; taking upon himſelf the expence that might be needful for his cure.

Go, YE, and do likewiſe! The poor Gentiles are preſented as objects for your compaſſionate regard. Their *Souls* are ready to ſink into everlaſting death. Sin hath ſtripped and wounded their nobleſt powers. Will *you* withhold the healing balſam of a dying Saviour's love, which has been made known to you? Will you not hold out to their relief that wine which *you* hope to drink, in its perfection, in your Father's kingdom? God has given you ability, of various kinds, to contribute towards ſo delightful a conſummation. Even with the unrighteouſneſs Mammon you may make your ſelves friends that ſhall hereafter receive you into ever-

everlaſting habitations. By a ſmall *temporal* ſacrifice, you may promote abundant *ſpiritual* good. The opportunity invites you, as it did the good Samaritan. Do not, like the prieſt and Levite, render it unproductive of anything but guilt!

Need I urge *authorities* for doing to others as you would have them to do to you. The unparallelled excellence of ſuch a rule of conduct ſpeaks for itſelf to *every* man's *conſcience*. Even thoſe who are ſo daring as to deny, or ſo unreaſonable as to doubt the truth of a divine revelation, unanimouſly concur in admitting *this* principle. This doctrine, perhaps alone, has never, to my knowledge, been called in queſtion where it has been heard of. But it is not the growth of earth, however admirably ſuited for the improvement of every ſoil. How generally ſoever it paſſes current, it is not of human coinage: it bears the image and ſuperſcription of God alone. Man never ſaw the arche-type of this idea, but in the life of the Lord Jeſus. Nor would any man have appointed a rule which none ever conſiſtently practiſed. We have it beſides *on record*, in ſacred writings, which allow none that are profane to enter into competition reſpecting *antiquity*. And this law, which came by Moſes, was illuſtrated and completed, not abrogated by the grace and truth which came by Jeſus Chriſt. How often is it repeated, how beautifully inforced, both by *our Lord*, and after the effuſion of the Holy ſpirit, by *his Apoſtles!* Let us be like them, "not without law to God, but "under the law to Chriſt*." If we reject his perfect law, of liberty from ſin, and of filial obedience we are indeed leſs excuſable, but not leſs deplorable in our condition, than the heathen whom I recommend to your compaſſion. No bark, without compaſs or helm, driven about by every guſt of wind,

* 1 Corinth. ix. 21.

and

and croſſed by every wave, could be in more uncertainty or danger, than we muſt be in renouncing the guidance of God's law. May we never loſe the ſight of our intereſt, nor the ſenſe of our obligations, to "love our neighbour as ourſelves!"

"Behold the *Lamb of God, who taketh away the ſin of the world*!"—Conſider the glory of his perſon, and the greatneſs of his ſufferings: think of the ineſtimable benefits received by his death, and hoped for through his life of interceſſion and authority; and aſk yourſelves whether delay and indolence are ſuitable, when HIS kingdom and HIS ſalvation are concerned!

Brethren, "what our hands find to do," towards extending the Goſpel of Jeſus to heathen and unenlightened nations, I truſt we are reſolved to "do with our might." Let us be careful to *act from the proper principle*. Let us often recur to our ſpring of action. We undertake a miſſion to the heathen, becauſe the law of God, and the grace of Chriſt, teach us to "love our neighbour as ourſelves." Whatſoever we do can be only acceptable to him from whom alone we can hope for ſucceſs, as it proceeds from *this* motive. Whatever language we may ſpeak, whatever gifts we may poſſeſs, whatever exertions we make, even in a cauſe ſo noble as the preſent, "without love we are nothing*."

Love, brethren, is an *univerſal* principle. Where it is genuine it extends to all our fellow creatures; it is applicable to every action of our lives. Let us *aim at conſiſtency*. Let our love to diſtant heathens appear to be ſincere from our diſpoſitions and conduct towards thoſe who are always with us. To *which*, amongſt them, have we yet given ſuf-

* 1 Corinth. xiii. 2.

ficient proof that we love them as ourſelves? Let our civil and religious connections find *their* advantage from the attention that has been raiſed, and the affections that have been excited towards the wretched heathen. I truſt the ſeveral denominations to which *we* belong, are, by our concurrence in this grand object, already drawn into cloſer union, than they ever were, or perhaps, otherwiſe ever might have been. Cheriſh this auſpicious harmony! May it prove the dawn of a brighter day than we yet have ſeen or thought of! But eſpecially, may you, my friends, who are likely to be peculiarly charged with the conduct of this important concern, attend to that exhortation, "let all your "affairs be done with charity*. You know, "it "ſuffereth long and is kind; it envieth not; "vaunteth not itſelf; is not puffed up; doth not "behave itſelf unſeemly; ſeeketh not its own; is "not eaſily provoked; thinketh no evil; rejoiceth "not in iniquity,—but rejoiceth in the truth; "beareth all things; believeth all things; hopeth "all things; endureth all things†."

Let us *trace this ſacred ſtream up to its original fountain.* It is the effect, therefore, the evidence, of ſpiritual life. "The end of the commandment is "love, out of a pure heart, a good conſcience, and "faith unfeigned‡." It is the leading fruit of the ſpirit of Chriſt§. Without this principle, the exerciſe of which is now called for towards the heathen, we are none of Chriſt's; for we have not his ſpirit¶. But we may rejoice in the certainty of having paſſed from death to life, if indeed we love our brethren‖.

* 1 Corinth. xvi. 14. † 1 Corinth. xiii. 4. 7.
‡ 1 Timothy i. 5. § Galations v. 22.
¶ Romans viii. 9. ‖ 1 John iii. 14.

Finally,

Finally, let us *follow it till it iſſues in a boundleſs ocean of bliſs and glory:* many things are commonly eſteemed religion, which, like the rivers of Arabia, are abſorbed in their courſe, and never reach the ſea. Not ſo the fraternal love of him who believes in Jeſus. It is congenial with heaven, and preparatory for it. It is the earneſt and the foretaſte of everlaſting life. In us, perhaps, the ſtream has yet been confined and broken. We truſt it is widening as it flows, and deepening with its length. May the love of Chriſt bear us onward with reſiſtleſs force, till mingling with the fullneſs of the Gentiles, we ſhall aſcribe "to the Lamb that was ſlain, and "hath redeemed us to God by his blood, out of "every kindred, and tongue, and people, and na- "tion; bleſſing, and honour, and glory, and "power, for ever and ever§," Amen!

§ Rev. v. 9, 13.

THE

# THE FULNESS OF TIMES.

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## SERMON IV.

PREACHED AT THE TABERNACLE,

*September* 23, 1795,

BEFORE THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

By JOHN HEY,

*BRISTOL.*

# SERMON IV.

EPHESIANS i. 10.

*That in the diſpenſation of the fulneſs of times, he might gather together in one, all things in Chriſt; both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.*

REAL religion, produces in all who poſſeſs it an aſtoniſhing greatneſs of ſoul. It ſwells the boſom with the pureſt deſires, and expands the heart with the moſt unbounded wiſhes for the happineſs of men, and the honour of GOD.--This remark derives ample proof from the character and conduct of the great Apoſtle of the Gentiles: What ſacred philanthropy dwelt in his breaſt!--What ſeraphic zeal fired his noble mind! Happy in the knowledge of his own ſalvation, he ardently panted for the ſalvation of others: and with all the vigour and warmth of an inſpired man, he laboured to win ſouls to JESUS CHRIST. Every conſiſtent method that could be deviſed he readily adopted, and *became all things to all men, if by any means he might ſave ſome.*

Nor was this all; his fervent love to precious ſouls was increaſed by their converſion to GOD. When they were ſunk in ſin, he exerted all his powers to reſcue them from impending ruin: and

when they were brought into a ſtate of grace, and were happily devoted to the Lord, then, he beheld them with paternal affection, and rejoiced over them with exceeding joy.--Viewing them as his peculiar charge, he *cheriſhed them, as a nurſe cheriſheth her children.*

From this ſource of paſtoral love, emanated the various epiſtles of Paul to different churches, and individual characters. And among all that he wrote, I know not any which breathe a diviner ſpirit than this to the Epheſians. It commences with an affectionate ſalutation. Then follows a general account of thoſe bleſſings, which were vouchſafed to them; together with that of the fountain from whence, and the medium through which they flowed. To this is added the great deſign of God in beſtowing them;--viz. The praiſe of the glory of divine grace.

The believing Epheſians, were doubtleſs, led to wonder at ſuch a diſplay of infinite love: but the Apoſtle, to increaſe their admiration, conducts them into a ſtill higher field: He informs them that GOD had revealed ſo much of the myſtery of his will to him and his fellow Apoſtles, as to authorize them to aſſert, that what was already done by the light and power of the Goſpel, was but a ſpecimen of what ſhould ſucceed; for in the diſpenſation of the fulneſs of times GOD would gather together in one, all things in CHRIST, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in HIM.

In the diſcuſſion of the ſubject our thoughts will be employed in meditating;--on the important period ſpecified in the text, and--on that glorious work which will be accompliſhed during the ſame.

I. The important *period* ſpecified in the text.--Our Apoſtle calls it, *The diſpenſation of the fulneſs of times.* By which he intends a marvellous ſeaſon of grace, which has not (at leaſt in the fulleſt ſenſe of the

the words) yet taken place.—To diſcover the import, ſtrength, and beauty of theſe expreſſions, we muſt fix our attention.

I. On the *times* referred to.—The bible ſpeaks of various times; ſuch as times appointed, times predicted, *times and ſeaſons which the* FATHER *has put in his own power*. Theſe ſeveral periods include every moment of terreſtrial exiſtence, from the creation to the end of the world; together with all that aſtoniſhing variety of occurrences which are compriſed and connected in the univerſal providence of GOD. Theſe multitudinous events, preſent themſelves to our view in the page of both ſacred and profane hiſtory, in greatly diverſified colours and forms.

We read of *times* of ignorance. Our world hath been moſt awfully afflicted with times of mental obſcurity; *darkneſs hath covered the earth, and groſs darkneſs the people*. It is true, ſome celeſtial rays, have been granted to particularly illuſtrious characters in the moſt benighted times. Several of the Antediluvian patriarchs were divinely illuminated of GOD. After them venerable Abraham and his deſcendants were, for many ages, highly diſtinguiſhed in this reſpect, becauſe to them pertained the adoption and the glory, the covenants, and the giving of the LAW: to them were committed the ORACLES of the living GOD.

But alas! what clouds of intellectual gloom inveloped the Gentile nations: They literally ſat in the ſhadow of death. For though there were ſome among them, who, by the aids of philoſophy, or rather the diverging rays of revelation, diſcovered ſomething, of what many have called natural religion; yet with all their boaſted wiſdom, how bewildered did they remain?—They had juſt light ſufficient to render their darkneſs viſible. The chief good and the way to attain it were equally concealed from their view.

But

But we have the pleaſure to obſerve, that mankind have been favoured with *luminous times*. JESUS, the great Angel of the covenant, foreſeen by the eye, and foretold by the lip of prophecy, deſcended and lightened the earth with his glory. *Life and immortality were brought to light by the Goſpel.* When the refulgent SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS unveiled his hidden glories; the diſmal caverns of darkneſs which were lined with thickeſt folds of ſullen obſcurity, and impervious to every inferior beam, became irradiated with the ſplendors of heavenly day. Temples of impious idolatry, were converted into places of ſacred devotion, and millions of ſouls exulted under the ſmiles of their incarnate GOD.

Happy, thrice happy, we are ready to ſay, would it have been for the immortal race of Adam, if this delightful period, this golden age of grace, had never been obſcured by ſooty exhalations aſcending from the bottomleſs pit. But hell had not as yet, exhibited its maſter piece. Devils now began to ſit in permanent council, and all, that Satanic ſkill could deviſe, all, that Satanic influence could produce, was determined upon.

In purſuance of this, appeared the Pagan fury, in the Roman emperors. That *fury*, which for the ſpace of near three hundred years moſt cruelly ſhed the blood of chriſtians, and glutted itſelf with human gore. Soon after this followed the great, infamous Arabian deceiver Mahomet; whoſe accurſed limbs were alſo bathed in blood, while he compelled the nations, that he conquered, to receive his baneful tenets on the point of the ſword. About one hundred years after him, in the ſeventh century, that hydra-headed monſter the Papal beaſt took his riſe, that beaſt, that *oppoſeth and exalteth himſelf, above all that is called God.* His coming, ſays an Apoſtle, was *after the working of Satan, with all power, and ſigns, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableneſs*

*ceivableneſs of unrighteouſneſs in them that periſh.* From hence reſulted a ſeaſon greatly to be lamented, viz.

A *time of error and general defection from the primitive faith.* The author of the ſecond Epiſtle to the Theſſalonians deſcribes this event in the predictive language of *falling away.* By this peculiar circumſtance, the man of Sin, the ſon of Perdition, was to be manifeſted; and marked with ſuch notorious abominations, as to be read and known by all enlightened perſons. This almoſt univerſal declenſion had a ſurprizing effect on the profeſſors of chriſtianity, and produced an aſtoniſhing alteration, both in the ſtate and the appearance of things; for from this alarming apoſtacy reſulted

*A time of awful ſuperſtition.* The moſt ridiculous, not to ſay blaſphemous modes of worſhip, were now invented, an almoſt endleſs train of contemptible, unmeaning, and uſeleſs ceremonies, were introduced into the pretended ſervice of GOD; while a long catalogue of eccleſiaſtical names and titles, were fabricated for the purpoſe of adding ſtrength, firmneſs, and permanency to the antichriſtian hierarchy. The hemiſphere of the church, now became obſcured, by ſucceſſive ſwarms of locuſts, which iſſued from the volcano of Rome. Theſe continued to multiply, ſpread, and prevail, till,

*A time of tremendous perſecution* began under the reign of the Papal beaſt. This perſecution raged with unabating fury for ſeveral ages. The moſt cruel and unheard-of torments were inflicted on thoſe who worſhipped GOD in ſpirit and in truth. Ah! what did the chriſtians in the vallies of Piedmont and other places ſuffer during this period? What lowering clouds of ignorance, ſuperſtition, and barbarity, overſpread the chriſtian world, till it pleaſed GOD, by raiſing up eminent men, to bring on

*The time of the glorious Reformation.* This was a time of joy and proſperity to the church of God.

Truth

Truth now began to ſhine in its native luſtre and beauty. The moſt ſolemn proteſtations were made againſt the errors of the church of Rome. The moſt bold and effectual meaſures were concerted, and adopted, for the ſubverſion of the Papal ſyſtem. Thouſands were ſpeedily led to the reception of evangelical doctrines; and whole nations, including both princes and people, which had long groaned beneath tyranny and oppreſſion, obtained liberty of conſcience, and glorified GOD.

We are now brought to that period, referred to in the text. We have glanced at times of almoſt every deſcription; times of ignorance, defection, ſuperſtition, perſecution, light, and reformation; at length we are arrived at the period called *the fulneſs of times*.

God, who worketh all things after the counſel of his own will, hath, in his unerring wiſdom, given permiſſion to new and falſe prophets, ſin and hell, popes and devils, to exert their utmoſt rage and influence in oppoſition to his cauſe and intereſt in the world. And now to confound theſe mighty adverſaries of his church, he will bring on, in the end of thoſe times, a diſpenſation of incomparable glory. This is ſtyled in our text *the diſpenſation of the fulneſs of times*.

What can our apoſtle intend by this, but the laſt ſtage of the goſpel diſpenſation; that epocha of it, in which, the refulgence of ſacred truth will burſt forth with overwhelming glories, and continue to ſhine till the gloom of ſuperſtition, of error and of ſin, is for ever baniſhed from the face of the earth. This thought introduces the ſubſequent part of the ſubject, which is,

II. That glorious work which will be accompliſhed during this wonderful diſpenſation. The nature of this work is expreſſed under the idea of gathering together in one all things in Chriſt, &c. viz.

viz. To incorporate in one body, or unite in one complete ſyſtem, all things in heaven and on earth.

This preſuppoſes that a diſunion and diſagreement have taken place, between the various ranks of beings, which God hath made. Several conſiderations unite to corroborate this idea. That happy and reciprocal influence which the creatures would otherwiſe have had upon each other, appears to have been perverted, and in numerous inſtances rendered noxious and deſtructive.

If we take a ſurvey of the ſyſtem of nature in general, we behold the red lightning gleaming through the vaſt expanſe and menacing the inhabitants of the earth with fiery ruin. We ſee winds and ſtorms deracinating ſhrubs and trees, and ſweeping away the herbage of the field; while tremendous earthquakes rend the ponderous rocks aſunder, and hurl the huge mountains from their deepeſt baſes.

So terrible and violent are the convulſions of nature ſometimes, that it appears as if ſhe meditated her own deſtruction. If we turn to the brutal tribes, we clearly perceive with what ſanguinary guſt, and ſavage ferocity many of them prey upon each other. If we contemplate beings of a higher order, beings that are diſtinguiſhed by rational and immortal powers; what baneful and deſtructive quarrels have obtained among them? we ſee not only one individual riſing up againſt another; but nation againſt nation, kingdom againſt kingdom, and not unfrequently a whole continent of nations, kingdoms and empires, engaged at once in the mutual ſlaughter. Nor is this all; the diſagreement has reached even heaven itſelf. How has the divine majeſty been inſulted by the avowed rebellion of wicked and ungrateful men! How have holy angels been diſpleaſed at the conduct of human ſinners, at a line of deportment ſo diſſimilar to that of their own! While deeply fallen devils, envying the glory of the

ſeraphic

ſeraphic legions, and exulting in the apoſtacy of man; have felt the moſt malignant joy at the awful breach that has taken place.

This alarming diſagreement was occaſioned by ſin. Sin entered into the world; and death, death, with all its harbingers, concomitants, and conſequences, by ſin. The earth ſuſtains a curſe in conſequence of the original tranſgreſſion of man; *curſed* (ſaid the Lord to Adam) *is the ground for thy ſake.*

Ferocious animals, in all probability inherit their rapacious diſpoſitions and devour their kindred beings under the influence of this curſe. That pride and accurſed ambition, which have generated the moſt deſolating wars, and rendered the world a theatre of blood, a mere ſlaughterhouſe of men, have originated in ſin. That variance which has ſo long exiſted between heaven and earth, is aſcribable to the ſame nefarious cauſe.

But notwithſtanding theſe awful breaches, the LORD JEHOVAH will fulfil his gracious purpoſe in *gathering* together in one, all things in CHRIST; both which are in heaven and which are on earth.

The preciſe import of theſe expreſſions may perhaps be difficult to aſcertain, but probably the following obſervations may tend in ſome degree to their elucidation. When the apoſtle aſſerts that God will gather together in one, all things in Chriſt, he means, That all things in creation, together with every event of divine providence and effect of ſovereign grace, are, and will be, ſo connected, as to compoſe one grand ſyſtem of univerſal economy; in which all the perfections of DEITY will ſhine forth with ineffable ſplendour and glory. The happy ſpirits around the throne in heaven, inceſſant in their adorations of the great ſupreme, unite in the ſubject of their ſongs, creation, providence, and grace. See Rev. chap. iv. and v.

But again; The inhabitants of different climes, cuſtoms, colours, habits, and purſuits, both in Chriſtian and in Pagan lands, ſhall be united in one large ſociety under the genial influence of goſpel grace: ſo *that there ſhall be one fold under one ſhepherd.* If this is adopted as the leading ſenſe of the paſſage; then by *heaven*, may be intended the church of CHRIST already exiſting in the world, and by *earth*, thoſe benighted lands which are ſunk in Pagan deluſion and idolatry. But without recurring to this conſtruction of the paſſage, we know from the poſitive declarations in the Bible, that JEHOVAH has determined to unite in JESUS CHRIST, both Jews and Gentiles, Barbarians, Scythians, bond and free, that *Chriſt may be all and in all.*

Theſe words may ſignify farther, that human and angelic intelligences will be aſſociated in harmony and love. It is evident beyond diſpute, that angelic beings have been employed with rapture and delight in announcing the glad tidings of ſalvation to men, and when by efficacious grace, men are reconciled to God, they deſire an aſſimilation to thoſe etherial ſpirits. Our adorable IMMANUEL has informed us that the time will come when the millions of redeemed men, ſhall be as the angels of God.

Some have ſuppoſed that the happy effect of this general union, will be the univerſal agreement of the inſtinctive and irrational tribes. Agreeably to this, ſpeaks the prophet Iſaiah chap. ii. ver. 6, 7, 8, 9. *The wolf alſo ſhall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard ſhall lie down with the kid and the calf, and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child ſhall lead them. And the cow and the bear ſhall feed; their young ones ſhall lie down together, and the lion ſhall eat ſtraw like the ox. And the ſucking child ſhall play on the hole of the aſp. And the weaned child ſhall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They ſhall not hurt nor deſtroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth ſhall be*

*full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.*

Is it improbable that the above cited passage may be literally fulfilled? As the gospel spreads, it will promote civilization, population, agriculture, and commerce: these will increase till every part of the habitable globe is cultivated and occupied. The result of this will be the extirpation of most of the noxious creatures, and may not those which remain, perhaps, be so far domesticated, as to herd with tamer animals, and even suffer children to play with them without injury?

But we have more immediately to do now, with that blessed union which will take place among men, when the Lord shall have accomplished his purpose in converting the heathen nations to himself. All mankind will then be made to drink into one spirit, agree in one hope of their calling, and unite in the worship and praise of the one everlasting JEHOVAH. In that *day there shall be one Lord, and his name one.* No God shall be worshipped but the true God, and all shall join in the delightful exercise.

The grand instrument by which this amazing work will be accomplished is the glorious gospel of God our Saviour. *All things are to be gathered together in* CHRIST, *even in* HIM. viz. In his name, through his mediation, and by his power.

The great commission with which the heralds of salvation are invested, is to go and preach repentance and remission of sins, in IMMANUEL'S NAME among all nations. To inform them that GOD *was*, and still is, in CHRIST, *reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.* The propriety and glory of this gospel message, are founded on the mediatorial work of JESUS CHRIST. *He who knew no sin, was made a sin-offering for men that they might be made the righteousness of* GOD *in him. He died the just for the unjust to bring sinners unto* GOD.

It is by the Almighty power of JESUS, that this great work is to be accompliſhed. For this purpoſe all power is given unto HIM in heaven and in earth. We have a fine illuſtration of this in Pſalm CX. 1, 2, 3. *The Lord ſaid unto my Lord, ſit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footſtool. The Lord ſhall ſend the rod of thy ſtrength out of Zion. Rule thou in the midſt of thine enemies. Thy people ſhall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holineſs from the womb of the morning thou haſt the dew of thy youth.*

There are weighty reaſons to be aſſigned why this important work will be effected by the inſtrumentality of the Goſpel of CHRIST.

I. It is ſuperior to all other ſyſtems. This appears in *the excellency of its doctrines.* The eſſential doctrines of the Goſpel lie in a narrow compaſs; They are remarkably perſpicuous, ſimple, and plain; though at the ſame time inconceivably ſublime. The principles on which they are founded, are the moſt obvious to men, viz. Juſtice and Mercy, and notwithſtanding their numerous ramifications, yet by no means beyond the reach of the human underſtanding. Theſe ſentiments are rendered indiſputable by matter of fact. How many thouſands are there in our own land, who, though their capacities are extremely feeble and entirely unaided by literary advantages; yet underſtand, love, and adorn the Goſpel of JESUS. That which has enlightened the poor and ignorant of one country is equally adapted to the inſtruction of the poor and ignorant of every country under the ſun.

The Goſpel ſurpaſſes all other ſyſtems in the *Glory of its Promiſes.* It engages to beſtow on its votaries, ſomething infinitely more felicitating and delightful than Elyſian fields and ſenſual gratifications. It inſures to all who embrace it, inviolable ſecurity, ſtrong conſolation, and ample ſupport under all the trials

trials of the preſent ſtate. It promiſes hope and joy, in death: and beyond the grave *an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.*

It excells all other ſyſtems in *the purity of its precepts.* Theſe infinitely tranſcend all the maxims of morality invented by heathen ſages, or impoſed by the corruptors of chriſtianity. Goſpel precepts are clear, conciſe, and deeply intereſting. They prohibit only what would injure us, and enjoin nothing but what will eſſentially contribute to our peace and happineſs. *The Statutes of the Lord are right rejoicing the heart. The commandments of the Lord are pure enlightning the eyes.* We know him who hath ſaid, *My yoke is eaſy and my burden is light.*

The threatnings contained in the Bible render it a fit inſtrument for converting the heathen. They ſpeak the language of impartial juſtice, and with God-like authority, are calculated to alarm the guilty conſcience in the moſt effectual manner, and to deter the ungodly from the perpetration of abominable crimes. The thundering ſound of that text; *The wicked ſhall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God*; has prevented the commiſſion of many crimes and much evil in the world.

II. The ſucceſs which has heretofore attended the preaching of the Goſpel evinces it to be the proper inſtrument for the converſion of mankind. On turning an eye to the hiſtoric page, we clearly perceive that it has operated wonders already. With what incredible rapidity did it fly through the nations, when firſt promulgated by the Apoſtles and their immediate ſucceſſors! How mightily did it prevail over the ignorance of ſavage Barbarians, and the deep-rooted prejudices of Jewiſh unbelief and Grecian pride? every effort that could be deviſed, was made to ſtem that torrent of Goſpel light which was then rolling on a benighted world. The implacable malevolence of infidel Jews; the terrible vengeance of the Roman arm; and the unbounded

bounded licentiouſneſs of Gentile idolaters; were all united to ſtop the progreſs of the conquering Saviour, but in vain. Jeſus rode on in his Goſpel chariot with majeſtic ſway, till his bleſſed word in a ſhort time was fully preached from Jeruſalem, round about to Ilyricum.--Rom. xv. 19.

Since the reformation, the Goſpel has gained ground; for notwithſtanding the ſuppoſed increaſe of deiſm, we have reaſon to believe that truth was never preached in greater purity, and never heard by greater numbers among us than it is at this day. --And we hope the time approaches when a ſtill brighter diſpenſation, and a more extenſive ſpread of the Goſpel will take place even in European, as well as in foreign and heathen lands.

III. Our expectations, as to the ſpread and prevalence of the Goſpel, are greatly encouraged by the promiſes which the divine *Father* has made to his incarnate SON. *Aſk of me and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the earth for a poſſeſſion. It is a light thing that thou ſhouldſt be my ſervant to raiſe up the tribes of Jacob, and to reſtore the preſerved of Iſrael; I will alſo give thee for a light to the Gentiles that thou mayeſt be my ſalvation to the ends of the earth.* Can everlaſting veracity fail to accompliſh ſuch promiſes as theſe? No! ſooner ſhall heaven and earth paſs away, than one jot or tittle of theſe paſs unfulfilled.

The predictions with which the Bible abound reſpecting this wonderful event, animate and confirm our hopes. Many of the prophecies have already had their accompliſhment, others remain to be fulfilled. Let us ſelect a few. *He ſhall have dominion from ſea to ſea, and from the river unto the end of the earth.--It ſhall come to paſs in the laſt days, that the mountain of the Lord's houſe ſhall be eſtabliſhed on the top of the mountains; and all the nations ſhall flow into it; I will gather all nations and tongues, and they ſhall come and ſee my glory. From the riſing of the ſun, even unto the going down of the ſame, my name ſhall be great*

*great among the Gentiles, and in every place incenſe ſhall be offered unto my name, for my name ſhall be great among the heathen, ſaith the Lord of hoſts.*

*This Goſpel of the kingdom ſhall be preached in all the world, for a witneſs among all nations, and then ſhall the end come.*

Hail, happy, happy, period! in which God will diſpenſe the bleſſings of his kingdom, kept in reſerve for thoſe who ſhall live in the latter days. When the ſtreams of richeſt grace ſhall emanate from the fountain of life, and flow in every direction to the moſt diſtant climes of the habitable globe. When *living waters ſhall go out from Jeruſalem, half of them towards the former ſea, and half of them towards the hinder ſea, in ſummer and in winter ſhall it be.*

From a review of what hath paſſed under our notice at this time, we may derive encouragement, as to our preſent momentous undertaking.

That arm which ſtands engaged to bring ſalvation to the heathen, is omnipotent. He that hath promiſed to gather the outcaſts of the people is JEHOVAH, and His deſigns cannot fail. He is a rock, and his work is perfect.

From predictions recorded; from promiſes given; from that ſucceſs which has attended and crowned feebler efforts already made; from that ardent deſire which glows in the boſoms of thouſands, both miniſters and people; from the preſent ſtate of illuſive ſyſtems, and the cool indifference of their reſpective votaries; from the prognoſticating aſpect of the times; but above all from the infinite love, the inviolable truth, the immutable faithfulneſs and the uncontrolable power of the LORD ALMIGHTY; What may we not expect?

But with all this encouragement let us not forget our province as to a vigorous, diligent, and perſevering uſe of means. The means are now before us, and that important plan by which our active endeavours will be regulated is now formed. All that we can poſſibly do, by rendering pecuniary

aid, by fervent and continued prayer, by encouraging thoſe who are judged fit perſons for a miſſionary life, to undertake ſo noble a work for God and for precious ſouls; all that can be done in theſe, or in any other way, demands our zealous co-operation, and our exertions ought to bear ſome proportion to the proſpects which open to our view.

My brethren, has the goſpel come to us *in power, in the* HOLY GHOST, *and in much aſſurance?* Do we indeed believe the Bible, and credit its divine teſtimony reſpecting the awful realities of the eternal world? Have we formed a proper eſtimate as to the value of immortal ſouls? Do we indeed love like thoſe who are born from above? and ſhall we refuſe to embark in ſo glorious a cauſe? Have we not applauded the tranſactions of our redeeming GOD? Have we not profeſſed to admire the wiſdom that ſhines and the grace that reigns in the plan of our ſalvation? And do we not from ſabbath to ſabbath in heavenly concert, crown the bleeding SAVIOUR with ſacred acclamations for his dying love, for his riſing power; for his groans on Calvary, and for his gracious interceſſion on Zion's holy hill? And ſhall *we* diſcover any inattention to, or reluctance in a work of ſuch mercy and magnitude as that now before us?--O let us not forget our cloſet ſighs, our ſecret groans, our private vows. Have we not prayed ten thouſand times, *Thy kingdom come?* Have we not ſaid among our friends, in our pulpits, and in our moſt ſolemn addreſſes to GOD, have we not ſaid, *For Zion's ſake I will not hold my peace, and for Jeruſalem's ſake I will not reſt, until the righteouſneſs thereof go forth as brightneſs, and the ſalvation thereof as a lamp that burneth, And until ſhe become a name and a praiſe in all the earth*; And ſhall *we* after all wrap ourſelves and our talents in the napkin of indolence, and ſit down in a ſtate of cold indifference? God forbid. While we enjoy the means of grace, the light of truth, and the

bleſſings

bleſſings of ſalvation, while we participate the pre libations of unclouded glory; O let us remember our brethren who are periſhing for lack of knowledge; let us remember and pray for them; let us remember and act for them; let us remember and go, and ſhew unto them the way of ſalvation.

In order to animate our minds and ſtimulate our efforts, we ought to contemplate the delightful effects which will reſult from our united exertions when ſucceeded by the bleſſing of GOD. Behold the meſſengers of the Lord winged with celeſtial alacrity and love, flying to different and widely diſtant climes, bearing the precious treaſure of the everlaſting goſpel in their hearts and on their tongues; ſee them, after having been divinely preſerved on the mighty ocean; ſee them, embracing foreign ſhores, and penetrating barbarous regions; regions, full of the habitations of cruelty and wretchedneſs. Behold theſe ſervants of the moſt high GOD, fixing the lamp of life and joy in the vallies of darkneſs and woe; while the ſavage tribes, late ſunk in ignorance and miſery, but now ſecretly drawn by ſovereign grace, preſs in crowds to catch the cheering ray. Behold theſe ſervants of the moſt high GOD, erecting the ſtandard of evangelic truth on the gloomy mountains of ſuperſtition and groſs idolatry; and Ethiopia ſtretching forth her hands, to partake of the golden fruit, produced by the bending TREE OF LIFE and deſigned for the healing of the nations.

What a pleaſing change now takes place! How different the aſpect of thoſe countries where the goſpel hath come with invincible energy. The ſeed of life is ſown, heavenly dews deſcend upon it, it takes root, ſprings forth, and produces in ſome thirty, in ſome ſixty, and in others an hundred fold. Now, beings who were once accuſtomed to plunder and ſlaughter, and who lived more like wild beaſts than men, are delightfully humanized, and their

their native ferocity yields to the influence of civilization. Immortal minds, which were held under the empire of darkneſs, immerſed in ſenſuality, and proſtituted to the moſt barbarous cuſtoms, and the moſt abominable crimes, are now made light in the LORD, holy in their affections, are divinely employed in acts of ſublime devotion, and engaged in the ſacred ſervice of the great JEHOVAH. Where the ſavage war whoop, the diſmal howl, that portended the ſanguinary onſet of murdering legions was heard; there, even there the melody of goſpel ſongs reſounds in the vallies, echoes through the plains, bounds over the hills, and flies acroſs the nations; and the lands of rapine, of horror, and of blood, become as fields which the Lord has bleſſed. Where ſmoaking altars ſtood, overſpread with human victims, even there, do peaceful temples of righteouſneſs and love appear, in which, not burning bodies, but glowing ſouls aſcend to God in the ſweet incenſe of tributary praiſe. In fine; regions which reſembled the very antichamber of hell, where the prince of darkneſs reigned in uncontroled tyranny, infolding his ſubjects in blackeſt wreaths of infernal gloom: theſe regions are happily emancipated from the moſt horrid ſlavery, and illuminated with celeſtial beams, whilſt JESUS, the prince of peace, enthroned in the ſereneſt glory, reigns over the nations with mildeſt grace and infinite love. *Now the wilderneſs and the ſolitary place is glad, the deſert rejoices and bloſſoms as the roſe, and the barren land is* converted into delightful fields of fertility and joy.

How ſolemn is this time! How eventful is this period! What objects do our wiſhes and hopes embrace?--Our mutual efforts aim not at the acquiſition of territory; or the accumulation of wealth; we do not aſpire after dominion over the perſons, the property, the conſciences and liberties of men; no, we wiſh to promote the temporal and everlaſting happineſs of our fellow creatures;

the felicity of individuals, of families, of nations, yea, of all nations were it the will of God.--What will the reſult of theſe our united exertions be? Unſeen worlds are waiting in ſilent ſuſpence to ſee the mighty iſſue; for mighty it will be, either in its failure or ſucceſs. It will either tend to eſtabliſh the triumphs of infidelity, or to ſpread the glories of IMMANUEL'S NAME. O when I reflect on this, how is my heart affected? but I will diſmiſs my fears; JESUS muſt reign till all his enemies are put under his feet.--Oppoſition we muſt expect. The powers of darkneſs grin horribly; ſceptics will hold our attempts in deriſion; timid and hypocritical profeſſors will cenſure our zeal; while ſavage barbarity and heathen prieſt-craft will make the moſt avowed and obſtinate reſiſtence to our well-meant endeavours.--But let us take courage; notwithſtanding this formidable alliance we may be confident of ſucceſs. Greater are they that are for us than all that be againſt us. Good men are praying for us; ſmiling angels are waiting ready on the wing, to aid our every ſtruggle; And our adorable MASTER bids us go forward, ſaying, *Fear not for I am with thee, be not diſmayed for I am thy God, I will keep thee, I will ſtrengthen thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteouſneſs, Be not weary in well-doing, for in due ſeaſon ye ſhall reap if ye faint not.*

God grant his bleſſing through Jeſus Chriſt.

GLO-

# GLORIOUS DISPLAYS OF GOSPEL GRACE.

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## SERMON V.

PREACHED AT SURRY CHAPEL,

*September* 24, 1795,

BEFORE THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

BY THE

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# ADVERTISEMENT

## TO THE READER.

THE Public are requeſted to notice, that this Sermon was entirely extempore; the preacher, not in the leaſt ſuppoſing that it would be demanded for Public inſpection, had nothing before him but a few references to different paſſages of ſcripture; and that the ſhort-hand writer could ſcarce preſerve a quarter of what was then delivered, as from the multitudes that attended, he was placed in a ſituation, in which he had neither room to write, nor an opportunity diſtinctly to hear. The preacher, however, has done his beſt in recollecting what was then delivered; and has preſerved, to the utmoſt of his power, the free, plain extempore ſtyle of his ſermon; nor has he conceived himſelf at liberty to add a new thought to the ſubject; but as he was compelled by neceſſity, either to keep up the connexion, or from the ſcantineſs of the materials he had for the work.

# SERMON V.

MATT. XXIV. 14.

*This Goſpel of the kingdom ſhall be preached in all the world for a witneſs unto all nations, and then ſhall the end come.*

IF ever my mind; felt the ſolemn weight of thoſe words of the good old Patriarch, "ſurely this is "none other but the houſe of God and the gate "of heaven," it is on this preſent occaſion. Can we ſuppoſe that ſo many of God's miniſters and people ſhould find it in their hearts to aſſemble together on ſuch a glorious deſign, and He not be preſent with them? O ſurely not! we believe him to be in the midſt of us. Nor can any thing ſhort of his ſpecial preſence, crown our labours with ſucceſs. What a mercy then, that we live in a day, in which the Lord's promiſe is, we hope, to be remarkably verified, "*Behold I am with you* "*always, even to the end of the world.*"

Matters of ſalvation are of infinite importance. The glory of bringing ſouls to Chriſt is the greateſt honour God can confer upon us. The ſalvation of one ſoul is of more worth than a thouſand worlds. My deareſt brethren in the miniſtry, may God fill us with the like ardent deſires to thoſe which warmed the Apoſtle's heart, when he was conſtrained

ſtrained to declare to his Galatian hearers, that *he travail'd in birth again till Chriſt was formed in them.* And while you thus aſſemble upon the buſineſs of ſending the Goſpel to heathen nations, may you on your departure, beloved brethren, from this our Britiſh Jeruſalem, be ſo filled with the ſpirit and power from above, as that you may be a thouſand times more ſucceſsful, not only in promoting good among thoſe whom you are more immediately concerned to ſerve in the miniſtry of the word, but alſo for the converſion of the *poor heathens in your neighbourhood*; for O, what crouds of heathens, and worſe than heathens, though under the chriſtian name, are every where to be found amongſt us! And why may we not expect that ſuch a fire ſhall now be kindled as that not only wonders be done among the nations that know not God, but that even in our own land, it ſhall be our portion alſo to be indulged with a remarkable revival of the power of religion, "a time of refreſhing from the "preſence of the Lord."

What littleneſs and inſignificance are ſtampt upon all the things of time and ſenſe, when compared to ſuch bleſſings as theſe! what avail the things that are temporal in compariſon of thoſe that are eternal? here are glories that words can never reach, nor tongue expreſs, and I wonder not at the ſenſations of one happy mind, who, though quite in the agonies of diſſolving nature, and beyond the power of giving an intelligible anſwer to any queſtion aſk'd, yet, with a hope full of immortality though in the jaws of death, felt ſuch bleſſedneſs upon his mind as conſtrained him to lift up his arms in triumph, and with a very heaven on his countenance thrice to repeat, O the glories! O the glories! O the glories!

Now to be made the happy inſtruments of conveying ſo much felicity, in ſuch ſolemn circumſtances, as this dying man felt, what an honour!

while

while we live, may God fill our hearts with theſe ſurprizing glories; that they may be our cordial in our departing moments; and may divine mercy teach a world of ſinners to ſeek the ſame!

We ſhall not then bluſh, at what the world calls the irregularity of our conduct: When an Apoſtolic warmth of zeal ſhall make every miniſter a Miſſionary around his own neighbourhood; and when, touched with the ſacred tenderneſs of Chriſtian compaſſion, he can never be contented while on earth, to leave a ſingle ſinner within his reach, unconverted to God.

A poor ſinner in her dying moments, requeſting that a deſpiſed ſervant of Jeſus Chriſt, might viſit her before her departure, heard ſome one ridicule her choice, that ſhe ſhould call in one of ſuch a methodiſtical character, a common ſtreet-preacher, and field-preacher; rouzed with zeal and gratitude to God, for the inſtrument of her converſion, ſhe ſaid to thoſe who ſtood around her, "let who will "deſpiſe him, I will thank him before men and an-"gels, that he went out into the ſtreets and lanes of "our city, to bring my loſt wandering ſoul to God:" I drop the hint, to encourage you my brethren in the bleſſed work of field preaching, that we may be inſtant in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon, and do the work of an Evangeliſt. But I am now to follow the plan deſigned from the text, Lord help me! The word before us, gives us to underſtand, that as wonders have in former ages been done by the Goſpel, ſo in future, ſtill greater glories ſhall be accompliſhed: Nor in our day *is the Lord's arm ſhortened that it cannot ſave, or his ear waxed dull, that it cannot hear.* Nay, the longer we live, the manifeſtation of ſtill greater glories ought to be expected; for the time is ſtill to come, when the *knowledge of God*, as ſays the voice of prophecy, *ſhall cover the earth, as the waters do the ſea:* yea, *the kingdoms of the earth ſhall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and his Chriſt*; while

ſaints and angels wait with holy impatience, were it poſſible, to rend the vault of Heaven at the arrival of the time, when that ſong, more univerſally than ever, ſhall be ſung, *Hallelujah! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth: King of Kings, and Lord of Lords!*.

I mean not merely to ſhew that the goſpel of the kingdom was preached in all ages, ſince the fall of man; but more eſpecially to note the out-pourings of the ſpirit in different ages, under the divine manifeſtation of mercy to mankind, that our hearts may be enlarged, and our hopes quickened on this preſent occaſion.

No ſooner had our firſt parents brought ſin into the world by their tranſgreſſion, and ſcarcely had divine juſtice pronounced the curſe, when ſovereign mercy dropt the gracious promiſe, *the ſeed of the woman ſhall bruiſe the ſerpent's head*; thus was the goſpel firſt preached in Paradiſe itſelf; they, to whom it was preached, we truſt, lived upon the promiſe given, and looked with long expectation after it; they even ſeemed to conclude, they had obtained the accompliſhment, when Eve, upon the birth of her firſt ſon, to render the paſſage more literally, cried, *I have gotten a man, the Lord.*

This we may call the firſt ſpring of mercy to fallen man; but we find it awfully limited to a narrow channel throughout the Antediluvian world; while ſuch floods of iniquity overſpread the face of the earth, that God himſelf is deſcribed as "*repenting* "*ing that he had made man,*" yea as being on this account, "*grieved at his heart*:" In the family of Noah alone, was the knowledge and fear of God preſerved.

But now the ſtream that began to flow from the moſt early period of time, gradually increaſes and continues upon the increaſe like a ſpreading river, till its wide extended currents open themſelves into the boſom of the ocean.

God

God ſeparated Abraham and his family early for that purpoſe. The faith of that renowned Patriarch was ſtrong and clear, reſpecting the perſon and glories of Chriſt. Faith is a long-ſighted grace, for notwithſtanding the diſtance of time, *he rejoiced to ſee Chriſt's day, he ſaw it and was glad.* Paul declares that the ſame faith, which juſtified Abraham, juſtifies believers in Jeſus in all ages; that the bleſſings of the ſame ſalvation, are to be imparted to us alſo, if bleſſed with the ſame faith that dwelt in him, who is the father of the faithful. And indeed, all the great works done by the worthies of old, are deſcribed in the eleventh of the Hebrews, as done by faith in the Lord Jeſus, which alone rendered them acceptable in the ſight of God, for "*without* "*faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe him.*"

A glorious increaſe was to be given to this family, the more they were perſecuted, the more they multiplied. Divine ordinances, inſtituted by God himſelf, were given them, that they might be kept apart from all other nations, and preſerved from their idolatry, and might be at the ſame time inſtructed to underſtand, and to wait for the kingdom of the Lord Jeſus; this was the caſket, in which the jewel of divine truth was preſerved, till it ſhone forth with all its luſtre, under the goſpel diſpenſation. The firſt diſplay of a more immediate outpouring of the Spirit of God, ſeemed to be, when the out-ſtretched arm of the Lord brought this his Iſrael out of Egypt. In reference to this period, the Lord thus expreſſes himſelf, concerning them, *go and cry in the ears of Jeruſalem; thus ſaith the Lord, I remember thee; the kindneſs of thy youth, the love of thine eſpouſals, when thou wenteſt after me in the wilderneſs, in a land that was not ſown; Iſrael was holineſs unto the Lord, and the firſt fruits of his increaſe,* Jer. ii, 2. And O that God would now create in the hearts of many, the ſame holy and devoted zeal, leading them to take pity upon heathen lands,

that they may go forth for his dear name's ſake, in a wilderneſs, in a land that is not ſown. While God propoſes the queſtion, who is he that will go for me? may the ready anſwer be found in the hearts of many prepared by himſelf, "here am I, ſend me."

We next notice other revivals that ſucceeded: Caleb the ſon of Jephunneh, and Joſhua the ſon of Nun, ſtand highly recorded in ſacred writ. Though ſin kept the generation of their contemporaries from the promiſed land—They rotted through unbelief in the Wilderneſs—yet nothing could affect the lives of theſe men of renown, or prevent them from poſſeſſing their deſired Canaan: great was the revival of religion in their days, and much good was done by their inſtrumentality: God was eminently with them, and they acknowledged him in all their ways. No Canaanitiſh foe could prevent their glorious progreſs, they were conquerors, yea more than conquerors, becauſe they believed on their God. And cannot God give the like precious faith in the preſent undertaking? When God ſays, *let there be light*, is it in the power of all hell to create darkneſs? When he ſays, ariſe, ſhine; ſhall not Omnipotence prevail? we triumph while we believe in God. *If God be for us, who can be againſt us?*

Once my mind had its doubts reſpecting a miſſion to the heathen: Unbelief ſaid there were a thouſand difficulties in the way. I thank God that my ſoul was made to bluſh, when that text was brought to my recollection, *God is able from theſe ſtones, to raiſe up children to Abraham.* Now what is ſo inanimate as a ſtone? Had the metaphor been taken from trees, or any other part of the vegetable creation, there we might have diſcovered the exiſtence, at leaſt of vegetable life; but what power can command ſtones to live, but the power of the living God?

We want men for this buſineſs, Calebs, and Joſhuas; ſuch as theſe only ought to go forth, and ſuch only as are armed out of God's armoury, ſhall ſucceed. Some that have worn their own earthly armour, have fatally proved how ill it anſwers their deſign; it interrupts their agility, and fruſtrates their intent; but the armour, which God's people are commanded to wear, proves juſt the reverſe. The helmet formed by man, though it adds a tallneſs to the ſtature, and a dignity to the perſon, yet muſt be ſupported by the head which wears it; but the divine helmet ſupports the head; it lifts the wearer up with a hope full of immortality. The ſhield of an earthly warrior is burdenſome to the arm that ſupports it, but the chriſtian feels that it is not the ſtrength of his arm which ſupports the ſhield, but that it is the marvellous virtue of the ſhield to ſupport his arm. The ſword of the ſpirit, which is the word of God, is a living word; the life of God is in it, and it ſhall not be directed by the hand, but it ſhall direct the hand of the Chriſtian, and ſhall bathe itſelf in the blood of all his ſpiritual enemies. O our God, give us but this panoply, and *one ſhall chaſe a thouſand, and two ſhall put ten thouſand to flight*; let us have but the heroiſm of the goſpel and the work is done. The promiſes of the word of God are glorioufly large; may our minds be impreſſed with their vaſt extent, and then what has been done ſhall be again done. May the Lord rouſe the ſpirits of his people, and fill you, beloved brother miniſters, with a greater and a more enlarged expectation of doing good; and the very expectation of doing good, will enable you to accompliſh it. Let nothing diſcourage you. Behold God is your ſalvation! he goes before you, and he alſo is your rearward. Your front and your rear are both defended by omnipotence. The devil has therefore no place left for his attack. How glorious the defence of the children, and miniſters of our God!

Several

Several other revivals of the power of religion next appeared, under the different governments of the judges of Israel; here, at times, God's people lamented their ſins, and under their national humiliation, they ſought him, and he was found by them. According to the multitude of his tender mercies, God addreſſes his people as in the bowels of a man; for he condeſcends to ſay, that *his ſoul was grieved for the miſeries of his people.* He firſt conſtrained them to repent, and then graciouſly revealed his pardoning mercy and tender compaſſion towards them.

Time would fail us to trace the like divine diſplays of grace, through the regency of Samuel, and the firſt part of the reign of Saul; and the increaſing glories which reſted on the church of God, while the ſceptre was entruſted in David's hands. We haſten to the time of Solomon. Then the reflected light given through that diſpenſation ſhone with its fulleſt ſplendour; but, like the ſhining of the moon which gradually withdraws her humble light till ſhe totally diſappears and hides herſelf behind the ſun, ſo we ſhall find that theſe gracious revivals gradually declined, till Jeſus the Sun of Righteouſneſs aroſe, creating the goſpel day of grace, and adorning it with all the glories of his great ſalvation.

Solomon's reign was filled with wonders; we trace however but the more pure and chaſte part of his hiſtory, while the Lord was truly with him.

He began his reign with divine communications with his God, and while he maintained communion with him he proſpered; his nobleſt wiſh was to build the temple. It was during that period that the heart of this prince was fully devoted to the Lord; his wiſdom, his riches, and his honours were entirely dedicated to promote the glory of his God; with zeal he completes the work which God had given him to perform. And now the temple is to be dedicated to him, for whoſe ſervice it was built. And

O what

O what a day is this, when all Iſrael appears before the Lord like a multitude which no man could number. The king himſelf leads the devotions of his people, and God miraculouſly declares his approbation of the ſolemn work, while flakes of holy fire deſcend on the ſacrifice already prepared for the divine ſervice, and the glory of God fills all the temple, and conſtrains the people to rejoice with reverence and godly fear.

And can we ſuppoſe that a mere outward and viſible manifeſtation of the glory of God was all that the great majeſty of heaven deſigned hereby? O ſurely no! he that is as a refiner's fire to the hearts of his people, was now doubtleſs working upon their hearts alſo, by his inviſible agency, that he might prepare them for himſelf, and then take them to his glory. In ſhort, does not this appear as the great Penticoſt of the Old Teſtament church, ſimilar in its nature and effects to that recorded in the New Teſtament, when cloven tongues of fire reſted upon the heads of the Apoſtles, a viſible ſign of their preparation for their important miniſtry, that through their inſtrumentality, great grace might reſt upon the hearts of thouſands, to prepare them for glory?

And O! what views further open to our minds, when we meditate on the multitudes of glorified ſpirits already brought to God, under theſe different out-pourings of the ſpirit of grace; they are long ago ſafely landed, and are waiting with holy joy for thoſe that are now coming, and for others that ſhall yet come, till God ſhall have accompliſhed the number of his elect, and finiſhed his great work of the ſalvation of millions of mankind.

After the days of Solomon, we find through the conduct of wicked rulers, awful declenſions among the people; but ſtill different revivals are to be traced. As through the influence of bad kings all the works of ſin and the devil were promoted, ſo through the

the inſtrumentality of good kings, God again revived his work in the midſt of them.

During the reign of Aſa, there was a glorious diſplay of the revival of religion. Azariah the prophet faithfully diſcharges his duty as a preacher before his king, while the king with no leſs devotedneſs attends to the word; with all diligence he ſets himſelf upon the work of a univerſal reformation, deſtroys every abominable idol out of the land, and again erects the altar of the Lord which, in the times of idolatry, had been broken down. He gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the ſtragglers with them out of Ephraim and Manaſſeh, and out of Simeon, *for they fell to him in abundance when they ſaw the Lord was with him, and they offered unto the Lord of the ſpoil which they had brought, ſeven hundred oxen and ſeven thouſand ſheep; and they entered into a covenant to ſeek the Lord God of their Fathers with all their heart, and with all their ſoul; and they ſware unto the Lord with a loud voice, with ſhouting, with trumpets, and with cornets; and all Judah rejoiced at the oath, for they had ſworn with all their heart, and ſought him with their whole deſire; and he was found of them, and the Lord gave them reſt round about.* 2 Chron. xv. 8. 16. Now, how many precious ſouls were ſaved under this revival, a future day alone can declare.

Again we trace another diſplay of the power of religion in the reign of Jehoſhaphat, or rather a continuation of the ſame good work carried on by the ſon, ſo happily begun in the days of his Father. He reforms the land from the remains of idolatry, and appoints godly judges to govern in different cities, and when he was in danger from the kingdom of Moab, he *ſought the Lord with all diligence*, proclaimed a faſt, and called all Iſrael and Judah to attend to it. They came with their wives and their little ones; they repented before the Lord, they acknowledged their wickedneſs, and made a ſolemn renunciation of thoſe ſins which bring down the wrath of God on his

his people. Then the God of Iſrael protected them, and then they appeared glorious as the Iſrael of God indeed. When ſhall England be bleſſed with ſuch ſolemn faſts as theſe? When ſhall we prove that we meet in earneſt for national humiliation, that national reformation may be affected thereby? when ſhall our great men lead the work, ſo as to be among the firſt who ſhall renounce and abandon thoſe evils, that have cauſed the righteous God in judgment to bring forth his vengeance againſt us? Time would fail were we yet to proceed further, to ſhew the bleſſed and proſperous ſtate of religion that next appeared under the reign of good king Hezekiah; how immediately when he began to reign he opened the doors of the houſe of God, reſtored religion, which had been brought into ſad decay through the wretchedneſs of his father Ahaz; commanded the prieſts and Levites diligently to ſeek the Lord, and do his will; directed that the houſe of God ſhould be cleanſed, and that all the divinely appointed ſacrifices ſhould be duly offered up.

Again we find him calling all Iſrael and Judah together to celebrate a ſolemn paſſover, inviting them by a moſt perſuaſive letter to come and ſeek the Lord God; and bending the hearts of multitudes to obey the ſummons; for we are told *the hand of God was to give them one heart to do the commandment of the king*, and *that divers of Aſher and Manaſſeh and Zebulon humbled themſelves, and came to Jeruſalem.* And no wonder when God himſelf conſtrains the aſſembly to draw near, that a peculiar bleſſing is given to ſuch waiting tribes. Read the hiſtory of this great reformation at large, as recorded in the 29th 30th, 31ſt of the 2d of Chronicles: there you will ſee the feelings of this great man's heart; he conceived himſelf not a king for himſelf; but a king deputed of God to promote his praiſe, and to do his will as a vicegerent of God's

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own theocracy. O the glories of ſuch a kingdom, under ſuch a government, with God himſelf in the midſt of it!

The laſt revival under the reigns of the kings of Judah was but of ſhort duration; we are told how diligently young Joſiah ſet his heart to ſeek the Lord; and nothing in his reign deſerves ſo much our notice, as the tenderneſs of his ſpirit in reading the word of God. This ſet him immediately on the work of God; once more religion lifts up its now languid head; and the ſolemn paſſover appointed by the king is attended with the bleſſing and preſence of God. Again they renew their covenant with him, and yet they were (though as we learn, Jer. iii. 6. 10. many among them turned but feignedly) enabled for a ſeaſon to abide by their ſolemn vows; for during all the days of Joſiah, *they departed not from following the Lord the God of their fathers.* 2d Chron. xxiv. 33.

And now a long night enſues. Through a ſpace of near ſeven hundred years, we read in the inſpired records (excepting what is referred to in the 44th Pſalm and ſome other places,) but of one revival of the power of the glorious faithfulneſs of the Jewiſh church in days of dreadful perſecution of religion, and that was under the government of Ezra and Nehemiah on the return of Iſrael from their Babyloniſh captivity. Let us a little inveſtigate the glories of that revival. The people had polluted themſelves by their unlawful connexions while captives in an heathen land, and even after their return from the captivity. Theſe by the command of God were to be renounced; and yet what dearer to nature than the wife of a man's boſom? but Ezra, the holy reformer was at a point with the people: the command was explicit; wives taken unlawfully are now to be rejected, and they yield obedience to what nature would call this ſevere injunction of the Lord.

Whatever

Whatever may be dear to us, may our Lord and God be dearer ſtill! yea dearer and dearer day by day! and O that Chriſt may find out for us, on this preſent work, thoſe that can forſake houſes, lands, brothers, ſiſters, huſbands, wives, and all for his dear ſake! and why ſhould any refuſe to forſake ſuch low things as theſe for him, who forſook his heaven, his glory, and hid not his face from ſhame and ſpitting, and at laſt laid down his life to ranſom us from the hell, that ſin moſt righteouſly deſerves, that he might make us partakers with himſelf of bleſſedneſs in eternal glory? I will make a few obſervations further on this laſt revival of religion before the coming of our Lord. The word of God was again brought forth into public notice. Ezra the ſcribe, ſtands on a pulpit of wood, from the ſun riſing, till the noon-day; for ſix hours at one time, he reads and expounds the word of God, aſſiſted by twelve others of the princes of Iſrael, ſix of them ſtanding on the one ſide, and ſix of them on the other; thus they laboured to inſtruct the people; for *they read in the book the law of God diſtinctly; and gave the ſenſe, and cauſed them to underſtand the reading.* Nehem. viii. 8. Nor were they tired with the length of the ſermon: no, a weeping congregation will not ſpeedily be weaned of the word of God, and it was a ſtrong evidence on their behalf that God was with them of a truth, that their hearts were melted before the Lord, and their eyes were a fountain of tears.

O what a refreſhing ſight would it be to us, my brethren, if ſuch were the ſtate of our congregations to manifeſt ſuch tenderneſs of heart, and ſuch readineſs at once to obey all that they hear from the ſacred word of truth! ſure I am, that no ſight is ſo glorious as the preſence of God upon a worſhipping congregation; nor any thing ſo animating to the heart of a miniſter, as when he perceives that the word he preaches comes to

the hearts of the hearers, with *the demonſtration of the ſpirit and of power.*

After this period till the coming of Chriſt, a groſs darkneſs for the moſt part covered the earth, religion ſeemed ſunk into formality, while the inſtitutions of God, at the ſame time were wretchedly blended with the inventions of men.

The ſpirit of prophecy was now totally withdrawn: no zealous reformers made their appearance, nor were any indications given of the people lamenting over their deſerted ſtate, or longing for the returning mercies of the Lord.

It is obſerved, that the darkeſt moment in all the night, is the moment which precedes the firſt break of day; and bleſſed be God, we are now to contemplate the glories of that bright day, created by the preſence of him who is *the brightneſs of his father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon.*

But there is ſomewhat in the progreſs of this light, which demands our attention. We find ſome wonderful ſtirrings of conſcience, (and it is well when God ſets conſcience at work) under the preaching of John the Baptiſt. Plain was his appearance, but powerful was his word; his buſineſs was to *prepare the way of the Lord.* If however his word ſeemed to have but a tranſient effect upon the minds of his hearers; one could not but ſuppoſe that when the ſon of God commenced a preacher, wonders indeed would be wrought, and that not a hearer could reſiſt when the incarnate Jehovah delivered his own word. But what was accompliſhed by the preaching of our Lord? His word was indeed with authority, and his aſtoniſhed hearers were conſtrained to acknowledge *never man ſpake like this man.* But notwithſtanding all this, and though he had multitudes for his hearers, inſomuch that he was obliged to take the mountain for his pulpit, though he went about from village to village, and from city to city to preach the goſpel

pel of the kingdom, we find no more after the crucifixion than a hundred and twenty ſouls, collected together in an upper room for fear of the Jews Where were the thouſands that attended the miniſtry of the Baptiſt? where were the multitudes that attended our Lord, and were fed by his miracles? The glorious power was not yet revealed, that effectually does the work, *the ſpirit was not yet given, becauſe Jeſus was not yet glorified.* He muſt firſt *put away ſin by the ſacrifice of himſelf.* It was not meet that the bleſſing ſhould be vouchſafed till the curſe was removed, but when once the great work was finiſhed, when Jeſus had aſcended into his heavenly kingdom, according to the glorious word, *lift up your heads O ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlaſting doors, and the king of glory ſhall come in*; when he had finiſhed his conqueſts and had *aſcended up on high, leading even captivity captive,* then came the bleſſed time when he would *give his gifts to men, even the rebellious, and come and dwell amongſt them.* Thus having prepared the manſions for his people, he next ſends down his ſpirit to prepare his people for thoſe manſions. O the glories of that ſacred day! *behold, now indeed, the tabernacle of God is with man!* According to our Lord's direction, the diſciples waited at Jeruſalem for the fulfilment of his promiſe, and lo! he comes, their underſtandings are enlightened, to underſtand the ſcriptures: their hearts are inflamed and they preach the word with faithfulneſs and power; before neither the thunders of John, preaching in the wilderneſs, nor yet the words of grace that dropt from the lips of Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, could effectually impreſs the minds almoſt of any; but now the preaching of a poor ſet of illiterate fiſhermen, melts the adamantine hearts of the murderers of Chriſt, and brings them by thouſands to ſubmit to his righteous and merciful ſceptre: On the very firſt day after the day of Pentecoſt was fully come, we hear of

*three*

*three thouſand*; at another time, we hear the numbers increaſed to *five thouſand*; then again, that *believers were added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women*; and further, *the number of diſciples multiplied greatly*; and, what was the greateſt wonder of all wonders, that *a great multitude of the prieſts were obedient to the faith.* Yea, we hear of whole villages, towns, cities, countries, which at once were ſubjugated to the Lord Jeſus, *ſo mightily grew the word of God, and prevailed*; now was the time, that *a nation ſhould be born at once, and as ſoon as Zion travailed, ſhe brought forth her children.* O the power that then went with the word! thoſe that heard were at once pricked to the heart; their cry directly was, *what muſt I do to be ſaved?* and the anſwer, as directly given, was, *believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved*: How muſt the decency, as we ſuppoſe of religious worſhip, have been interrupted thereby, but O bleſſed interruption, when God himſelf wrought ſo gloriouſly, and ſo many ſouls were brought into divine ſubjection to the croſs of Chriſt! May God ſend us ſuch bleſſed interruptions in all our congregations? Oh they are Glorious!

It may be aſked what became of the multitudes that attended the miniſtry of our Lord, and his harbinger John? It ſtrikes me that many of theſe had now their convictions revived, and were found among the happy thouſands who received the Goſpel diſpenſation. The ſeed was firſt ſown by John, and by our glorious Lord, and afterwards being watered by the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt, ſprung up to the glory of God: what encouragement this to every ſincere miniſter to be diligent in his work? ſecret convictions may a long time abide in the heart, before a thorough converſion to God is effected. *Caſt thy bread upon the waters, and thou ſhalt find it after many days.* We ſhall reap if we faint not.

Oftentimes, when I have been engaged in preaching, and perhaps in the contemptible work of

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ſtreet preaching too, when I have thought that the whole town was dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, ſome few ſecret ones have been found, allow the plain expreſſion, and I left them like neſt eggs. I viſited them again, and the numbers ſoon increaſed, till the little one became a thouſand.

But what remarkable evidence is given by all theſe revivals, that the work in which we are engaged, is indeed, the work of God; *not by might, nor by power, but by my ſpirit ſaith the Lord*; for what was the doctrine, eſpecially in the great revival on the day of Pentecoſt? The plain ſimple preaching of the croſs of Chriſt. And who were the inſtruments? A ſet of plain illiterate fiſhermen: Better a thouſand times, to have the ſimplicity of a Peter, than the eloquence of a Longinus, if we are but made uſeful to the ſouls of our fellow creatures, that preaching is always the beſt, that beſt anſwers the end of preaching; let us, therefore, go forth preaching, as it is worded in the text, *the goſpel of the kingdom*, and that too with ſimplicity, and godly ſincerity, and not with fleſhly wiſdom, and what has been done, ſhall be done. God will ever ſtand by his own truth, and if he be for us, who can be againſt us? Preaching the Goſpel of the kingdom, does all the work. I hate the pride of ſuch, as would fain attempt to ſet aſide this glorious diſpenſation, and are ever attempting to eſtabliſh, what they call, the powers of reaſon in its ſtead, and are ever boaſting of the mighty things that it can effect: had they, however, a little more of the ſame faculty, they pretend ſo plentifully to poſſeſs, they would not expoſe themſelves by ſuch aſſertions, for what can reaſon do, while under the influence of corrupted nature? Nay, ſay they, it is *paſſion*, and *appetite*, not *reaſon*, that then govern the man; but if paſſion and appetite prevail over the human underſtanding, ſo that good is avoided as an evil, and evil ſought after as a good, and theſe furniſh

our reaſoning powers with their materials, we may eaſily conclude what will be the conduct and the choice; nay, ſay they, ſhall it be ſaid, that a drunkard acts according to reaſon? certainly not; but he acts according to *his* reaſon; and, does a man, in a violent paſſion, act according to reaſon? according to that, which he, at that inſtant of time, calls reaſon, he certainly does. And both the drunkard and the paſſionate man will give you a *thouſand reaſons*, as they call them, for their conduct; and, however, badly they reaſon, it is reaſon to them; and, however, *wrongly* they may be guided, yet *their reaſon* was their guide; and it is not likely, that a *wrong guide will lead a man right:* in ſhort, every man's reaſon directs him to ſeek after happineſs, and while the carnal mind ſuppoſes there is happineſs to be had in the indulgence of luſt and paſſion, reaſon will lead that road: In ſhort, *ſound reaſon* can never be engrafted, but upon *real religion**.

The fact proves itſelf. Where are the converts of theſe boaſted rational preachers? A fig for all their pretenſions to wiſdom, if they cannot produce one ſingle ſample of a precious ſoul being converted from ſin to God thereby.

I bring forward the character of the great Mr. Whitfield on this occaſion; I hope you do not bluſh for me, that I mention his name on this ſubject, for verily I ſhall not bluſh for myſelf. God gave him a moſt enlarged mind, liberated him from all the wretched trammels of education; he knew no party, his glory was to preach the Goſpel to every creature; bigotry his ſoul abhorred; and like

* If any one chuſes to try the ſtrength of his reaſon, a little further on this ſubject, I would refer him to that maſterly production on the will, publiſhed by preſident Edwards, and I ſhould hope that his reaſons may correct the reaſoning of thoſe, who expect right reaſon from a darkened underſtanding, and a depraved heart.

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a ſecond Sampſon, he has ſo made her main ſupporting pillars to totter, that you and I, my brethren, rejoice that ſhe trembles to the very foundation, and live in daily hopes, that her complete deſtruction ſhall complete our joy.

Now I will not ſay, I thank the devil for any thing; but I will ſay, I thank God for that permiſſive providence, whereby that great man, being turned out of the churches, eſteemed it his duty to preach at large. His firſt attempt was among the poor Kingſwood colliers; I defy any miſſionary upon earth, to find a darker ſpot, or to viſit a more benighted people; theſe he called out of the holes and dens of the earth, and to theſe he preached *repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jeſus Chriſt:* And O, it was a lovely ſight, to behold the glorious effect! Eyes unaccuſtomed to weep before, now began to flow with the tears of repentance unto life, white ſtreaks appearing thereby on their black faces, now turned up towards heaven, praying for mercy and forgiveneſs; knees unaccuſtomed to prayer before, are now bended down in fervent devotion before God; and their lives well and wiſely regulated by the power of that grace, which had done ſuch wonders on their hearts. Now mind what theſe faſtidious ſons of pride, and ſelf conceit, had to ſay on this occaſion; to be ſure, Whitefield has done good among theſe low ſort of people: Now we cannot thank them for their compliment, as it is given with ſuch a wretched ill grace; but a higher panegyric cannot be framed. We generally ſuppoſe, he is the beſt phyſician that cures the moſt deſperate diſeaſes: And we ſhould alſo ſuppoſe, that he is the beſt miniſter, notwithſtanding the *convenient* terms of methodiſt and enthuſiaſt, that cures the diſeaſes of the mind, in its moſt deſperate ſtate.

Let us try how ſome of theſe rationaliſts in religion, (as they *humbly* wiſh to be thought) would be likely

likely to ſucceed on a ſimilar occaſion. Let them ſeek for ſome other colliery of the like deſcription; there take one of their nicely compoſed paper-pop-guns, and read it among the multitude. I would willingly and gladly carry the ſtool behind them, to ſee what ſort of figures they would cut, in their attempts to reform. I hate ſuch ſilly pride, and it is beſt corrected by the laſh of ridicule and contempt.

But a part of our plan is yet to be conſidered. To trace what has been done ſince the apoſtles' days, time would by no means allow; and ſucceſſes of a later date have already been well preſented before you. We have now to encourage ourſelves from the promiſes and propheſies of the word of God, of the glory that ſhall be revealed. The text itſelf gives bleſſed encouragement to our expectations, the *Goſpel of the kingdom ſhall be preached in all the world, for a witneſs unto all nations; and then ſhall the end come.* And what may we not yet hope for, when the Lord himſelf has ſaid to his well-beloved Son, *aſk of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the earth for thy poſſeſſion.* In Iſaiah, prophecy abounds to encourage our hopes. God ſhall ſay *to the North give up, to the South hold not back; bring my ſons from far, and my daughters from the end of the earth.* (Iſa. xliii. 6.) *For I will give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayeſt be my ſalvation to the ends of the earth. In an acceptable time have I heard thee, in a day of ſalvation have I helped thee; I will preſerve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to eſtabliſh the earth, to cauſe to inherit the deſolate heritages; that thou mayeſt ſay to the priſoners, go forth; and to them that are in darkneſs ſhew yourſelves.* (Iſa. xlix. 6, 8, 9.) And again in the 60th of the ſame prophet, how glorioufly the Gentile church is called to *Ariſe and ſhine, ſince her light is come, and the glory of the Lord is riſen upon her.* Even while *darkneſs covered the earth and groſs darkneſs the people, the*

*Lord*

*Lord ſhould ariſe upon Zion; and the Gentiles ſhould come to her light, and kings to the brightneſs of his riſing*, that *her ſons ſhould come from far, and her daughters ſhould be nurſed by her ſide*; at your leiſure read the whole of the chapter, and take encouragement therefrom to ſet about this bleſſed work of God, with all your hearts, and all your ſouls, and all your ſtrength. Convinced therefore, from the word of prophecy, that greater things are to be done than ever yet have been done, let us encourage ourſelves in our God, waiting with holy expectation till other nations *ſhall caſt away their idols, that they have made, to the moles and to the bats, and turn unto the Lord.* Yes, my beloved, may not even we, that now compoſe this ſolemn aſſembly, live in humble hopes, that ere long we may ſee ſome devoted miſſionary returning, in holy triumph, to this his native land, with ſome deteſted idol, that had robbed the great Jehovah of his honour, renowned and adhered to by its once deluded votaries, now in the midſt of the congregation exhibited the ſportive triumph of all our hearts? and further may we not expect to behold ſome humble convert himſelf bleſſing God in the midſt of us for the work of this glorious day, in conſequence of which his ſoul was brought out of darkneſs, to behold the marvellous light of the goſpel of Chriſt? And we have recent inſtances before us, that greatly encourage us to the work. I am very glad to mention the conduct of our Moravian brethren in this reſpect; their zeal, their patience, and diſintereſted diligence, in the like work, are beyond the praiſe that words can reach, and our gracious Lord has aſtoniſhingly bleſſed their attempts: ſome of our Weſt India Iſlands have been ſurprizingly evangelized by them; the inhoſpitable climates of Greenland and Labradore have received the glad tidings of ſalvation, through their inſtrumentality, neither the burning regions of the South, nor yet the frozen foreſts of the North, could ever impede

their amazing love for ſouls. A nobler, amore diſintereſted example we cannot follow than theirs; I hope, we ſhall all feel it our privilege to keep up the moſt friendly correſpondence with them. We will thank them heartily to tell us how they did the good, that we may go and do likewiſe; a better way we cannot deviſe, than theirs; for it has anſwered the end; ſouls have been brought to Chriſt thereby; they that do not ſpeak moſt honourably of their miſſion, do themſelves the greateſt diſhonour. But I will take the liberty to remark one odd fancy of theirs; they ſuppoſe that the ſoul of a poor man is equally valuable, in the ſight of God, as the ſoul of a rich man, and they have ever proved it, by going among the moſt abject of mankind.

What has been alſo done by our own government, by ſending out ſome valuable miſſionaries to the Eaſt Indies, deſerves a token of acknowledgement, and I heartily pray that the Arminian Methodiſts, ſo called in their miſſion, may ſend a *free grace* Goſpel throughout the world, and the late attempt ſet on foot by our Baptiſt brethren, I truſt will be crowned with large ſucceſs; and though our difference about the ordinance of baptiſm may conſtrain us to act in different lines, and they cannot permit us to communicate with them, yet we are determined to be up with them, for both they, and others, if they love the Lord Jeſus in ſincerity, ſhall be moſt heartily welcome whenever they pleaſe, to communicate with us.

Our deſign is all the ſame: no matter for the name of the boat that ferries over the poor benighted ſinner into the land of Goſpel light and liberty, provided the bleſſed work be but accompliſhed. I hate bigotry with my ſoul, and while ſo many goſpel miniſters of different denominations aſſemble together, for the ſame purpoſe, I ſtill hope to live to ſee it ſubſiſt no more, to divide the

chriſtian from the chriſtian; while each of us ſerves God in his own line, why cannot we love as brethren?

Let names, and ſects, and parties fall,
And Jeſus Chriſt be all in all.

I confeſs, in the ſimplicity of my heart, that ſome expreſſions have dropt from my lips, which I never deſigned on this very ſolemn occaſion; I am ſure your patience and candour will inſtruct you to forgive, but we muſt be ſerious, ſerious indeed, while we conclude with ſome remarks, on what ought to be the character of the miſſionaries themſelves.

And what manner of perſons ſhould theſe indeed be, in all holy converſation and godlineſs! how full of that heavenly mindedneſs, and ſpiritual mindedneſs which ſhall raiſe them ſo far above the world, as though they had ſcarce an exiſtence in it! what a holy burning zeal for the ſalvation of ſouls? and what wiſdom from above to conduct that zeal! what purity of knowledge to deal with thoſe whoſe deep-rooted fondneſs for their antient ſuperſtitions, will make them watch, with a jealous eye over every attempt to declare among them the truth, as it is in Jeſus.

Nor ſhould their patience, meekneſs, and child-like ſimplicity, be leſs eminent than their zeal. They muſt win by love, and conquer by holy perſeverance; they muſt not be like ſome ſort of miſſionaries, who ſuppoſe they are to be ſent a pleaſant voyage at the public expence: but they muſt be men *that count not their lives dear unto themſelves, ſo that they may finiſh their courſe with joy, and the miniſtry which they have received of the Lord.* Men that can be contented out of pure love to Chriſt, *to ſtand in jeopardy ever hour.* They muſt not only *live* like martyrs, but perhaps *die* like martyrs;

tyrs; we know not but the ancient proverb of the primitive Chriſtians, is again to be revived, the blood of the martyrs, is the ſeed of the church; they muſt be as dead to themſelves, as if they had no being, they muſt be completely crucified with Chriſt; in ſhort, ere they embark upon the work, they muſt learn to *leave themſelves behind them*; with holy triumph they muſt be taught to ſay, farewell my dear native land, farewell to all the eaſe and happineſs, and earthly indulgences I have enjoyed therein; welcome affliction, neceſſities, diſtreſſes of every kind; labours, watchings, faſtings, I now dread no more. Welcome a life now to be ſpent in journeying often, on perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderneſs, in perils by the ſea: yea, welcome wearineſs and painfulneſs, hunger and thirſt, cold and nakedneſs; yea, welcome death itſelf, whenever the bleſſed Lord himſelf, who died for me, demands that coſtly ſacrifice at my hands: Theſe are the men that ſhall be made more than conquerors, over all the difficulties that human prudence, or unbelief, would preſent before us, to impede the way.

Human wiſdom we well know, would ſoon puzzle herſelf in the undertaking; while her little taper is brought to find the way through the darkneſs of the night, ſhe only appears to add blackneſs and obſcurity to all things beyond the little region her rays can reach; but when the ſun ſhines forth, he ſpreads his light upon the moſt diſtant objects, and every path is plain before us.

Some may have apprehenſions that little can be done, becauſe miracles are wanting, and the gift of tongues is withdrawn: Doubtleſs, Peter had a notable proof at hand of the doctrine he preached, while the lame man was leaping in the temple, who had been healed by the name of the Lord Jeſus but juſt before: But miracles never ceaſe, while ſouls

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are converted to God; nor will tongues be ever wanting, while the wonderful change wrought by the grace of God, ſo loudly beſpeaks the praiſes of his wonder-working power; let heathens ſee what grace can do on a real convert; and we need not any further be diſcouraged for want of miracles and tongues. And that ſpirit of unanimity and zeal which has hitherto attended the work, is a happy ſign that good ſhall be done, while the torrent runs with ſuch rapidity, for the accompliſhment of ſo good a deſign, I would not for the world but appear on the Lord's ſide, on this occaſion. *Curſe ye Meroz, ſaid the angel of the Lord; curſe ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, becauſe they came not to the help of the Lord; to the help of the Lord againſt the mighty.* No, my brethren, the providence of God commands that we exert ourſelves for his glory: Difficulties there doubtleſs are; and an abundance of prayer, prudence, and holy zeal, will be neceſſary to conduct the work; but God can provide all that is neceſſary to carry on his own work, in his own way; and we have nothing to do but to follow as he condeſcends to lead. Thanks be to God for the unanimity, and good will, that have hitherto ſubſiſted among us, and may we ſtill be found ſteadfaſt, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, foraſmuch, as we are aſſured, that our labours ſhall not be in vain in the Lord.

# OBJECTIONS

## AGAINST A MISSION TO THE HEATHEN,

### STATED AND CONSIDERED.

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## SERMON VI.

PREACHED AT

TOTTENHAM COURT CHAPEL,

BEFORE THE

FOUNDERS OF THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

*On Thurſday the 24th September*, 1795,

By DAVID BOGUE,

*OF GOSPORT.*

# SERMON VI.

HAGGAI. i. 2.

*Thus ſpeaketh the Lord of Hoſts, ſaying, this people ſay, the time is not come, the time that the Lord's houſe ſhould be built.*

*WHAT doſt thou here Elijah?* was a queſtion propoſed of old, from the throne of heaven, to one of the moſt eminent Servants of the Lord of hoſts. His anſwer is recorded by the unerring pen of inſpiration, in 1 Kings xix. 14. and deſerves our notice. *I have been very jealous for the Lord God of Hoſts; becauſe the children of Iſrael have forſaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and ſlain thy Prophets with the ſword.* Should the Great Jehovah deign to aſk the reaſon of our meeting at this time, and to ſay to each of us; *What doſt thou here?* I truſt we can reply, "We feel a zeal for the glory "of the Lord God of hoſts: we are deeply grieved "for the ſtate of the heathen nations, becauſe they "are ſtrangers to the covenant of promiſe; aliens "from the commonwealth of Iſrael, and living "without God, and without hope in the world. "Of the numerous temples which decorate their "cities, not one do we perceive dedicated to the one "true God: They are all the habitation of idols. "Altars we ſee in vaſt abundance, but not one "erected to Jehovah. They are all for ſacrificing to

" demons, or gods the work of their own hands,
" With grief we behold the greater part of the ha-
" bitable globe in this condition, and far more than
" one half of the inhabitants of the earth ignorant of
" the true God, and of Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath
" ſent, whom to know is eternal life. And deeply
" concerned both for the honour of God, and their
" ſalvation, we are met under the auſpices, we hope,
" of infinite wiſdom, power, and grace, to concert
" a plan for ſending miſſionaries to the heathen, to
" proclaim the glad tidings of ſalvation through the
" blood of the croſs, and to turn them from darkneſs
" to light, and from the power of Satan unto God."

O that the ſame ſpirit who came down on the Apoſtles, on the day of Penticoſt, may deſcend on us, to inſpire us with wiſdom, love, and zeal to make the meeting profitable and delightful to our own ſouls, and to honour us as his inſtruments for conveying the knowledge of ſalvation to thoſe miſerable nations which are ſitting in darkneſs and in the ſhadow of death.

You have already attended on the labours of five of the Miniſters of Chriſt who have preached to you on this ſolemn occaſion. It is allotted to me to cloſe the ſervice. May I be aſſiſted with your prayers, and the ſupply of the ſpirit of Jeſus Chriſt. What I have in view is to conſider the objections which may be raiſed againſt the deſign of our preſent meeting, and to ſuggeſt ſuch anſwers, as will, I truſt, be deemed ſatisfactory. The words of the text, ſet before us a claſs of men exactly ſimilar to thoſe with whom I am called to contend.

They ſaid *the time is not come, &c.* Difficulties and dangers appeared before their eyes; the diſpenſations of Providence, and the aſpect of human affairs did not ſeem to favour their efforts, and therefore they think it beſt to relinquiſh the object for the preſent, and wait for a more convenient and auſpicious ſeaſon. Too many now imitate the

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ſpirit of theſe ancient objectors, and ſay, "The "time is not come when the mountain of the "Lord's houſe ſhall be eſtabliſhed on the tops of "the mountains, and exalted above the hills, and all "nations ſhall flow into it. The time is not come, "the time when God will give his ſon the heathen "for his inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of "the earth for his poſſeſſion." But the objections will, I flatter myſelf be found equally vain. Jehovah himſelf, deigns to anſwer thoſe timid and incredulous Jews, declares their fears to be groundleſs, and commands them to put their hand to the work without delay. While in a humble dependance on his aid, I attempt a reply to modern objectors, by conſiderations drawn from his word and Providence, may He who teacheth man knowledge, and can make babes eloquent, ſuggeſt ſuitable ideas to my mind, and inſtruct me to expreſs them in fit and acceptable words, that conviction may be carried to every heart, and that we may all with one accord cry out, "The time is come, the time that the "houſe of the Lord ſhould be built. Let us labour "with all our might, that it may ſoon riſe ſtrong, "beautiful, and extenſive, from the ruins in which "it has ſo long lain."

Some think the following general obſervation ſufficient to deſtroy the force of every thing that we can urge. "Numberleſs difficulties preſent themſelves to my mind, ſo that I am quite diſcouraged: "the object, though deſirable, has ſo many formidable hindrances, that in preſent circumſtances, it cannot ſucceed."

In anſwer to this, I would briefly remark that the man who does not expect difficulties, has eſtimated the matter unwiſely. Difficulties, the moſt tremendous difficulties are to be looked for. Will Satan ſuffer his kingdom to fall without a ſtruggle? No, he will rouze all hell to arms againſt us; and his inſtruments on earth uniting themſelves to the

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Hoſt from beneath, will do every thing in their power to prevent the progreſs of the goſpel of the Redeemer. But here is the foundation of our hope. Chriſt has all power both in heaven and in earth. He is infinitely mightier than his oppoſers, and all his enemies ſhall be made his foot-ſtool: and he has aſſured us, that He came to be a light to enlighten the heathen, as well as to be the glory of his people Iſrael. Carry this thought in your minds, my dear hearers, in the anſwer I propoſe to every objection; that, while I endeavour to ſhew it as void of ſtrength, and point out the great encouragement we have to hope for ſucceſs, our ſole dependance, in the uſe of his appointed means, is placed here, namely, on the wiſdom, grace, and power of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

But I proceed to conſider the ſtrongeſt particular objections, which have occurred to my own mind, or have been ſuggeſted to me by others.

It is objected by ſome; "the work itſelf is ſo "very arduous, that ſucceſs cannot be hoped for."

True, my friends, you have mentioned one of the greateſt difficulties we have to encounter, I perceive it in all its force. Were the attempt, to prevail with men of diſtant lands, merely to lay aſide their ancient prejudices, to caſt their dumb idols which cannot ſave, to the bats, and to the moles, and to aſſume but the outward profeſſion of the chriſtian religion, even this would be unſpeakably difficult. For we ſee how ſtrongly people are attached to the religious ſyſtems, received by tradition from their fathers. But this would not ſatisfy us, could we perſuade them to renounce their idolatry, and to eſpouſe the chriſtian name, and join us in the ordinances of worſhip, if we did no more than produce an external conformity, we ſhould account nothing done. The object we have in view is infinitely beyond this. It is to illuminate the brutiſh mind of a Pagan beſotted with ignorance

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and ſuperſtition, in the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jeſus. It is to make him feel his miſerable ſtate as a ſinner, and to lead him to a cordial acceptance of Chriſt as made of God unto him, "wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption." It is to bring him from the love of the world, to a ſupreme love to God as his Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. It is to draw him away from the indulgence of divers luſts and pleaſures which reigned in his ſoul, and from all the impurities of a Pagan converſation, to a life of unreſerved and univerſal obedience to the will of God. It is to lead him from the ſtupid adoration of ſtocks and ſtones, and the ſenſeleſs, impure, or ſanguinary rites of the Heathen mythology, to worſhip the Father in ſpirit and in truth, and to render to him the homage of a pure heart, wholly devoted to his ſervice. How difficult theſe things are, no true Chriſtian need be told. Yet this is what we wiſh to do, what muſt be done; and nothing ſhort of this will ſuffice. But who is ſufficient for theſe things! may we not ſit down in deſpair and throw the deſign aſide? Yes, if we required or expected theſe things to be done by man, we might. But they are the work of God who has promiſed to perform them: and then I ſay, why are ye caſt down, ye timid ſouls, and why are your unbelieving hearts diſquieted within you: Man we regard as the inſtrument, as the pen in the hand of a ready writer, as the harp emitting a melodious ſound, but we look up to God for his mighty power to accompliſh the arduous work of the converſion of the ſoul. All now is eaſy, every obſtacle diſappears. He who created all things out of nothing, by a word, cannot he create the ſoul anew in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works? He who raiſeth the dead from the grave, cannot He raiſe the chief of ſinners from the death of ſin to newneſs of life?

life? He who turneth the ſhadow of death unto the morning, and changeth the blackneſs of the night into the brightneſs of noon day, cannot he make the heathen man who was once darkneſs, light in the Lord, and enable him to walk as a child of light? our faith is confirmed by the unqueſtionable evidence of facts. God has already performed this work in millions of inſtances, and in circumſtances as unfavourable as we can poſſibly meet with. What he has done, he can ſtill do; for he is the ſame yeſterday, to day, and forever. With theſe truths let the chriſtian's mind be fortified; and the objection will be heard no more.

II. Another objection very frequently urged, is "that the time for the converſion of the heathen "is not yet come, becauſe the Millenium is ſtill at "the diſtance of ſome hundred years."

"It is not for you," ſaid Chriſt to his diſciples, on a certain occaſion, "to know the times "and the ſeaſons which the Father has reſerved in his "own hands." Till predictions be accompliſhed we cannot, in moſt caſes, define with certainty, the preciſe period of fulfillment. There are various opinions with reſpect to the commencement of the Millenium, or that Æra when all the nations of the earth ſhall have received the goſpel. Many have placed it at the diſtance of two hundred years, or in the two thouſand year of the chriſtian Æra. Some ſuppoſe that it will begin about the middle of the next century. It is neither my province nor my purpoſe to determine the diſpute. But I beg you to conſider that in aiming to propagate the goſpel, we are to be guided by what God enjoins as a duty, not by what he delivered as a prediction. He has plainly told us that, "in Chriſt all the "families of the earth ſhall be bleſſed." He has informed us that by the preaching of the goſpel this great work will be accompliſhed; and he has taught us the ſtrong obligations we are under

under to pity thoſe who are ſitting in darkneſs and in the ſhadow of death. Here is ſufficient authority for us to form a miſſion without delay. Let all other things be left to God. I will grant, if you pleaſe, for the ſake of argument, that before the millennium arrives, two hundred years muſt yet elapſe. This in my view does not furniſh any cauſe of diſcouragement. That the ſucceſs of the goſpel will be ſo rapid, " that a nation ſhall be born in a day," does not appear to have the weight of evidence which many, without examining the matter, have always taken for granted. The work may be gradual, and if ſo, it will be allowed, that it is more than time to begin. But if we conſider the ſubject attentively, we ſhall be compelled to acknowledge that in order to propagate the goſpel throughout the whole world in the ſpace of two hundred years, its progreſs muſt be rapid indeed. In that ſpace, to bring all the extenſive Mahometan kingdoms to the faith of Chriſt, to convert all the vaſt Pagan empires in the eaſt and north; and all the idolatrous inhabitants in the thouſands of iſlands ſcattered over every ſea, the progreſs of the goſpel muſt be amazingly great, and millions muſt be converted in a year. In a word the religion of Jeſus muſt have more rapid ſucceſs than it has ever had, ſince it was firſt preached in the world; more rapid ſucceſs than it had under the miniſtry of the apoſtles themſelves. So that if we view the objection cloſely, ſo far from being in danger of a ſpirit of procraſtination, we muſt feel anxiety not to loſe a ſingle day ere we begin. If the ſhorter period mentioned above be the true one there is need of haſte.

Further ſuppoſe we cannot hope for the millennary ſtate of the church among the Heathen in our time, ſhould that diſcourage us? I aſk *you*, my brethren, who preach the goſpel, whether it was with the hope of producing ſuch a ſtate, that you undertook the paſtoral care of the ſeveral churches, over which

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the Holy Ghoſt hath made you biſhops. All will ſay: "we ſhould rejoice in ſuch a ſtate, but we do "not expect it here in our days. We think "ourſelves more than amply repaid, if we can "ſee religion flouriſhing, though in a degree un-"ſpeakably ſhort of the glory of the millennium." Well then, if by the labours of our miſſionaries abroad, we can but produce ſuch a ſtate of religion as in the beſt of our churches at home, will there not be the greateſt reaſon to rejoice that we have not laboured in vain, nor ſpent our money and ſtrength for nought. It may be the will of God, that by the labours of miſſionaries, religion ſhall attain the ſame degree of progreſs among thoſe who are now Pagans, as among us: and that thus they ſhall be prepared for ſome remarkable outpouring of the ſpirit, which ſhall precede and introduce the glory of the latter days.

What has already been effected by the preaching of the goſpel among the Heathen, tends farther to deſtroy the force of the objection, and to encourage even ſanguine hopes of doing great things. Every effort that has been made, has been crowned with as much ſucceſs as could, all things conſidered, have been reaſonably expected. The miſſionaries of the church of Rome boaſt of hundreds of thouſands, nay, of millions converted by their labours. But to paſs over their zeal, and their patient, vigorous ardent and extenſive exertions, and to ſay nothing of the facility with which idolatrous Pagans might embrace their ſhewy religion, their pompous ritual, and the worſhip of images, as all bearing ſome reſemblance to their own ſyſtem, the ſucceſs of the Daniſh miſſionaries in Hindoſtan, of the Moravian brethren in Greenland and the Weſt-Indies, of the ancient paſtors of New England, Elliot and Mayhew among the Indian tribes, and of the Scotch ſociety among men of the ſame origin, by the miniſtry of Brainard, Horton, and others in later times; theſe all give us

the moſt ample encouragement to proceed; and plainly ſhew that God is willing by his ſpirit to give efficacy to the word of his grace, and "that the time "to favour Zion, yea the ſet time is come.

III. Others ſay "what is there in the ſtate of the "Chriſtian church at preſent that flatters with pe-"culiar hopes of ſucceſs for a miſſion to the Hea-"then? Many ages have elapſed and little has "been done, what makes the time now ſo favour-"able. Are we better than our fathers?"

That chriſtianity has ſpread itſelf among the heathen nations, in a very inconſiderable degree, for at leaſt a thouſand years paſt, is a mournful truth. Indeed if we except the colonies planted in Pagan lands, the boundaries of the church have been rather leſſened than extended. But this is no ground of diſcouragement, to thoſe who conſider the matter with attention. The church of Rome, which for the greateſt part of this long ſpace of time overſpread nearly the whole of chriſtendom, had ſo obſcured chriſtianity by an innumerable multitude of rites, ceremonies, traditions and errors, that the purity and ſimplicity of the goſpel were almoſt wholly defaced. In ſuch a ſtate of things could we wiſh Popery to be ſpread over the face of the earth? what would this have been but to ſubſtitute one ſuperſtition for another? A reformation greater than the firſt, would have been neceſſary to make the people acquainted with the nature and ſpirit of the goſpel. See ye not then my dear hearers, ſufficient reaſons why it was the will of God that what was then called chriſtianity ſhould not become an univerſal religion in the world, and that the heathen ſhould continue in their Pagan ſtate during the days of Popery.

At the reformation the Biſhop of Rome loſt his power. From that time to the preſent century, the Proteſtant churches ſpent their chief efforts in eſtabliſhing themſelves in authority; in each party

trying to vault into the ſaddle of power, and ride upon the back of all others; in furious conteſts with each other; in inflicting or enduring cruel perſecutions; in reſiſting oppreſſion; or in attacking, and defending themſelves againſt the Papal pretenſions to dominion. Theſe cauſes prevented the propagation of the goſpel. In the preſent century, the nature of the church of Chriſt, as a ſpiritual kingdom, and not of the world, has been better underſtood than it ever was ſince the days of Conſtantine; and Chriſtians have felt their obligations to ſend the goſpel to the heathen nations. Some efforts have been made by different ſects, but with one exception, feeble in compariſon of what might have been; and I know not that any denomination has Miſſionaries among the heathen, much exceeding in number, the Apoſtles of our Lord. Every one, however, who is awake, hails with joy the dawning of a bright day of true Chriſtian zeal for the ſpreading of the goſpel in the world, and ſalutes with affection the various ſocieties engaged in this divine work.

We have now before us a pleaſing ſpectacle, Chriſtians of different denominations, although differing in points of church government, united in forming a ſociety for propagating the goſpel among the heathen. This is a new thing in the Chriſtian church. Some former ſocieties have accepted donations from men of different denominations; but the government was confined to one. But here are Epiſcopalians, Methodiſts, Preſbyterians, and Independents, all united in one ſociety, all joining to form its laws, to regulate its inſtitutions, and manage its various concerns. Behold us here aſſembled with one accord to attend the funeral of *bigotry:* And may ſhe be buried ſo deep that not a particle of her duſt may ever be thrown up on the face of the earth. I could almoſt add, curſed be the man who ſhall attempt to raiſe her from the

grave. Beſides the diſplay of liberality, greater than has ever appeared, I might add, that it is likewiſe a time in which the doctrines of the goſpel are at leaſt as well underſtood as they ever were before. If I ſhould ſay *better*, it would not be arrogance, or aſſuming any peculiar excellence to ourſelves; becauſe we ſtand upon the ſhoulders of preceding ages, and the many venerable men who lived before us, have by their labours illuſtrated and confirmed the truth, refuted error, and freed the goſpel from all foreign and corrupt mixtures. As God has favoured us with it in its genuine ſimplicity, may we not conſider this as a happy omen, that he will cauſe it to run, and be glorified? When Chriſtianity at firſt was moſt pure, God gave it great ſucceſs; as it grew corrupt, its progreſs was ſtopt: Now when he has reſtored it to its priſtine purity, may we not hope he will revive its ancient influence in the world? When Chriſtianity was divided into many bigotted parties, to propagate it would have been the diffuſion of the rancour of ſchiſmatical violence, the hot ſpirit of ſectarian zeal more widely in the world; and therefore the goſpel was not ſpread. Now, when there was a union of different denominations acting cordially together for the propagation of their common Chriſtianity, may we not look for ſucceſs? At firſt believers were *all of one heart, and of one mind*; as to the things of religion, in the latter days, it will moſt probably be ſo again. But is it not an approach to ſuch a ſtate, when the diſciples of Chriſt, agreeing in the grand doctrines of the goſpel, unite in miniſterial and Chriſtian communion, and join to diffuſe Chriſtianity, and not their own particular ſects, and a ſimple mode of church government drawn from the apoſtolical writings, which ſhall be found beſt adapted to the ſtate of the heathen world, and not the diſtinguiſhing modes of any one denomination. I cannot but augur well from ſuch a beginning; and

I own

I own I feel a conſiderable degree of pleaſing confidence, both that we ſhall be drawn into a cloſer union with each other at home, and that our united efforts will, by the peculiar bleſſings of heaven, be crowned with ſucceſs abroad.

IV. A common objection is: "The governments "of the world will oppoſe the exertions of your "plans," and defeat its deſign.

Is not this a groundleſs fear? Let us hope they will not oppoſe us. Why ſhould they? From our own government we ſhall meet with no oppoſition: On the contrary, I flatter myſelf they will countenance our proceedings, and favour our efforts in countries where their influence extends. This I conſider as an advantage to thoſe miſſions which may be employed in the vaſt empire of Hindoſtan. As to the governments of the countries to which our Miſſionaries go, I am ſure they will have no reaſon to oppoſe us. It is a fundamental law of our ſociety: "That the Miſſionaries ſhall not in the "ſmalleſt degree interfere with the political con-"cerns of the countries in which they labour, nor "have any thing to ſay or do with the affairs of the "civil government: And whoever ſhall tranſgreſs "this rule, will be immediately diſmiſſed with "ſhame." The ſole buſineſs of a Miſſionary is to promote the religion of Jeſus. Whatever may be the duties of a ſettled paſtor in his own country, where he is not only a miniſter of the goſpel, but likewiſe a ſubject, a citizen, and a member of the community, (all which relations lay certain obligations upon him, and call for a correſponding conduct) it is certain that a Miſſionary, who is an alien in a foreign land, has nothing to do with civil affairs, and his only buſineſs is to propagate religion. The knowledge of our ſentiments on this ſubject, and the peaceable, harmleſs, and benevolent conduct of our Miſſionaries may remove the prejudices of thoſe in authority, and influence them to grant our

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friends protection, and treat them with kindneſs. Chriſtianity is a ſyſtem of divine truth, highly favourable to the peace, virtue, and happineſs of civil ſociety; gives by its moral principles the greateſt ſtability to governments; binds together the body politic in the ſtrongeſt and cloſeſt bonds; and forms the ſureſt barrier againſt thoſe ſentiments and vices which looſen the bands of ſocial union, and endanger a country's welfare.

But whatever influence theſe conſiderations may have on the minds of the rulers of the world, let us ever remember this reviving truth, That all human governments are under the dominion of the great Head of the church, who turneth the hearts of kings as he doth the rivers of water, and can ſo diſpoſe their minds as to make them favourable to our plans, and willing to permit our Miſſionaries to preach the goſpel in the countries where they reign. On this doctrine ſhould our hearts reſt with unſhaken faith; and here ought our chief dependence to be placed. Who will venture to aſſert that the heathen governments which now exiſt, are worſe than thoſe of old, where Tiberius, Claudius, Nero, and Domitian reigned at Rome; or other monarchs at the ſame time in Parthia, Ethiopia, and India. Yet under them was the goſpel propagated in the world. He who of old made lions tame while Daniel was in their den, ſo contracted their rage, and conquered their diſlike, or elſe ſo fully engaged their thoughts about other ſubjects, that the word of the Lord had free courſe, and was crowned with great ſucceſs. When they manifeſted cruel opppoſition to the croſs of Chriſt, he moderated their fury, and after a ſeaſon put a ſtop to their violence by death, or change of mind; ſo that the truth continued inſenſibly to ſpread, and the very ſufferings of believers proved the increaſe of the church. What God did then, cannot he do now? And are not the ſouls of men and the intereſts

tereſts of his church as dear to Him now, as they were then? Animated by theſe encouraging views, may we not go forth, truſting in Him who is infinitely higher than the higheſt upon earth, and who received his kingdom for this very purpoſe among others, that He might exerciſe his power in reſtraining and ſubduing all the oppoſition, which the principalities and powers of this world ſhould make to the diffuſion of his glorious goſpel. I proceed to a

Vth Objection. Many ſay: "The preſent ſtate "of the heathen world is ſo unfavourable with re- "ſpect to religion, that little hope can be enter- "tained of ſucceſs."

That the religious ſtate of thoſe countries, which are ignorant of the Goſpel, is truly deplorable, all who view it with eyes enlightened from above, will readily allow; "the dark places of the earth are "full of the habitations of ignorance and cruelty." Mahometans blend ſome knowledge of a ſupreme being, with a thouſand abſurdities; and the Pagan nations have not gone ſo far in the path of religion, as to learn the exiſtence of one God, the creator of heaven and earth; and are beſides ſunk into the loweſt abyſs of ignorance, idolatry, ſuperſtition, and vice: A mournful ſight indeed to the lover of God and man! But what ſentiments and conduct ſhould it inſpire? when Paul of old, ſurveyed the famous city of Athens, he ſaw the inhabitants wholly given to idolatry; but did the views generate deſpair? Did it influence him to leave the Athenians to follow their own wicked devices? No, his ſpirit was ſtirred within him; the divine word, was as a fire in his bones; and he felt all the eagerneſs of Apoſtolical zeal to proclaim aloud in their ears, the doctrines of the glorious Goſpel: And ſhould not the ſtate of the heathen world which is ſo deplorable, produce the ſame effect in us? Were it not bad, it would not require our aid. In proportion to its badneſs,

badneſs, are we called to help; and its extreme badneſs, furniſhes the moſt powerful motive to exert ourſelves to the utmoſt, for the ſalvation of their periſhing ſouls. Could we ſurvey each of the heathen nations with minute attention, while we ſaw reaſon to weep over their deplorable ſituation, we ſhould yet find no cauſe to deſpair of ſucceſs; their ignorance is brutiſh: But is not the Sun of Righteouſneſs able to baniſh it, by ſhining upon them with ſalvation on his beams: Their prejudices may be ſtrong and obſtinate; but is not the power of the glorious Goſpel of the bleſſed God, able to diſpel them all. Their enmity to the ſelf denying doctrine of ſalvation, by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, may be inveterate; but is not the energy of divine grace, able to bring down every high thought that exalteth itſelf againſt the honour of his croſs? Their wickedneſs may be very great, and their long habits of iniquity, ſuch as nature and reaſon cannot deſtroy; but is not the Holy Spirit of Chriſt, able to renew their depraved hearts, and to bring them to the obedience of faith, and evangelical ſanctity of life? Some of their civil inſtitutions, and modes of life, may appear to raiſe a formidable barrier againſt the approach of the Goſpel; but is not the united power of divine providence and grace, able to level this barrier to the ground, and to make a plain path for the entrance of the religion of Jeſus into the ſoul. As an inſtance of the impediments thrown in the way by civil inſtitutions and local cuſtoms; the different caſts into which the inhabitants of India are divided, have been conſidered by many, as preſenting a ſtate of ſociety, which muſt effectually hinder their converſion; but is it proper for us to entertain ſuch a thought? That they are to be converted, is plain from the word of God. That this impediment will be removed out of the way, is equally certain too. God may, indeed, by terrible things in righteouſneſs, employ ſuch diſpenſa-

tions of providence, as ſhall effectually deſtroy theſe pernicious diſtinctions which Satan hath formed, and ſo prepare the way for the entrance of the Goſpel; but he can eaſily do the work by the Goſpel alone. To paſs by the Mahometans there, who are not ſubject to theſe abſurd reſtraints, the loweſt claſſes cannot be much degraded by embracing chriſtianity, and thoſe who have loſt cast, not at all; and, by our Miſſionaries aſſociating with them, they may, on the contrary, acquire ſome degree of reſpectability and conſequence; and their ſouls are as noble and valuable, as thoſe of the proud Bramins: When a hundred or two are converted, here is an aſylum, into which, converts of ſuperior caſts may retire, and the enlightening doctrines of the Goſpel, when once they enter into their ſouls, will deſtroy the pride of caſts, and contempt of others, and teach them to embrace with affection, every Chriſtian whatever he formerly was, as a brother. And, when once a Chriſtian caſt, if I may ſo ſpeak, is formed, it will appear more honourable than all the reſt, and every believer will conſider himſelf as exalted, not degraded, by the change, as the number of converts increaſes, the impediment will be leſſened, till at laſt, it entirely vaniſhes away. Beſides, when we recollect, what Chriſtian converts have parted with, and what they have endured, in numberleſs inſtances, for the ſake of the Goſpel; can we think it impoſſible, for an Indian to ſubmit to loſs of caſt, for the love of Jeſus Chriſt, the joys of his ſalvation?

But the weakneſs of this objection, will be ſtill more apparent, if we conſider for a moment, the ſtate of the antient Pagan world. The capacity and diſpoſition of the Heathens, to receive the Goſpel; is not a new queſtion, juſt propoſed for inveſtigation, it is above ſeventeen hundred years old: Nay, it has been tried, and a deciſion given in our favour. The Goſpel was preached to them, and it was crowned

with ſucceſs; nor does it appear, that the condition of the Heathens was more favourable to the Goſpel, than it is now. In theſe ancient days, their ignorance of God was as profound, their prejudices as violent, their enmity as ſtrong, their vices as deteſtable; the wordly intereſts of many who lived by the follies of ſuperſtition, as much affected by the reception of the truth; the Pagan prieſts were at leaſt as numerous, as bigotted, as powerful in their influence, and as feelingly alive to their honour, their wealth, and their rank among the people, as they are now in any land; ſages and philoſophers were as proud, as ſtrongly attached to their own ſyſtems, bore as great a ſway over the minds of the people, from a ſuppoſition of ſuperior wiſdom, and diſcovered a ſovereign contempt of Chriſtianity, and its profeſſors; and princes were as jealous of their authority, as fearful of any thing that might infringe on their dignity, and as ſanguinary in oppoſing whatever they thought had a tendency to leſſen their power, as any can poſſibly be in modern times; yet even then the Goſpel flouriſhed, and not merely while the preachers had the power of miracles and the gift of tongues; but for ages after theſe had ceaſed. Does not this repreſentation afford much encouragement to us?

The wicked lives of men called Chriſtians, may be urged as a peculiar diſadvantage in modern times. It is undoubtedly a ſtumbling-block in the way, and muſt beget ſtrong prejudices in Pagan minds. But though this did not exiſt of old, the belief of it did; and that was almoſt as bad in its effects. Need I inform you that Chriſtians were charged with murdering children, and drinking the blood in their ſolemn rites; that they were accuſed of promiſcuous intercourſe in their religious aſſemblies; that they were conſidered by the multitude as guilty of the moſt odious vices. On theſe accounts, according to the prediction of our Lord, we are informed

formed by ſome of the graveſt hiſtorians, that the Chriſtians were hated by the whole human race, as a deteſtable horde, polluted by the moſt atrocious crimes. With ſuch ſentiments, circulating among all ranks of men, and generally credited, did the ancient Pagans hear the Goſpel; and, in ſpite of all theſe, multitudes embraced it. Matters, then, with reſpect to this circumſtance, are more nearly on a level, than may be at firſt imagined: and, as the convert of old, ſoon perceived the falſhood of the reports circulated againſt Chriſtians; with the ſame facility the regenerated Pagan now will learn the difference between a true Believer, and the mere nominal Profeſſor who diſgraces the title, and the ſtumbling-block is thereby removed. The great David Brainerd informs us, that the rude Indians urged this objection againſt Chriſtianity, from the wicked lives of its profeſſors, and with all the energies of ingenuity and eloquence. But they were converted by the power of the Goſpel: and the ſame glorious truths confirmed by the holy lives of our miſſionaries, and accompanied by the energy of the Spirit, will, I truſt, ſtill produce the ſame effects.

Some might repreſent it as an advantage of modern Times, that whereas of old, Chriſtians were treated with contempt, and were for a ſeaſon confounded with the Jews, a deſpiſed people, now many of the barbarous nations look up to Chriſtians as a ſuperior race of beings, on account of their eminent ſkill in arts and ſciences; and are therefore more likely to receive the Goſpel. But I lay no great ſtreſs on it in the argument. The people of Lyſtra who venerated Paul and Barnabas, as Gods come down from Heaven, and haſtened with ſacrifices to teſtify their veneration, in a little while ſtoned them with ſtones, as the vileſt of men, and dragged Paul out of the City as dead. I may however obſerve, on the whole of this particular, that we have no reaſon to ſhrink from the compariſon,

or

or to conſider modern Heathens as more averſe to the Goſpel than ancient Heathens were.

The great and hurtful miſtake in the whole of this objection lies here. People conſider miſſionaries going forth among the Heathen as mere men with no wiſdom ſuperior to their own, with no ſtrength above human, and they are greatly diſpi rited; but did we view a miſſionary as we ought, and as he is, with Jeſus his maſter at his right-hand, accompanying him on the way, and the Holy Spirit reſting on him like a flame of fire, with all his powerful energies, we ſhould not be caſt down, but maintain a cheerful hope amidſt the darkeſt appearances of Pagan ignorance and obſtinacy, and perſevere, truſting in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

VI. objection is: "How and where ſhall we find proper perſons to undertake the arduous work of miſſionaries to the Heathen."

This is certainly a matter of the higheſt importance; on good miſſionaries how much depends! It is indeed an arduous office, and requires the union of two diſtinguiſhing qualities in an eminent degree, *Knowledge* and *Zeal*. A miſſionary muſt be a burning and a ſhining light. The rays of divine knowledge muſt ſhine forth brightly from his mind, and the fire of divine zeal burn with a pure flame in his heart. Heat without light will not ſuffice, for the health and growth even of vegetables, far leſs of ſpirits. Heat without light is conſidered as deſcriptive of the Pit below, not of the New Jeruſalem where Jehovah dwells. He that goes to preach Chriſt in Heathen lands, ſhould be a ſcribe well inſtructed into the Kingdom of God. His Knowledge of divine things ſhould exceed thoſe of an ordinary paſtor of a church already formed, becauſe from him a whole country may receive its views of the Goſpel, and be caſt as it were into his mould. And how pure and full ſhould his ideas of the Goſpel be! When God ſent forth the firſt miſſionaries

to plant chriſtianity among the heathen, he inſpired them with a perfect knowledge of it in all its parts. And is it not incumbent on us ſo far to reſpect the divine pattern ſhewn in the Mount, as to do all in our power that thoſe whom we ſend out to the ſame glorious work, ſhall be men eminently diſtinguiſhed for an enlarged and comprehenſive underſtanding of the myſtery of the Father and of Chriſt? Things produce their like. Error in the miſſionary will produce error in the converts; ignorance will produce falſe and imperfect views; and pure truth in all its parts will produce pure truth on the Pagan's mind, and ſanctity and conſolation as naturally flowing therefrom. We are going to ſend by our miſſionaries to the Heathen, a gift of ineſtimable value, and while we are anxiouſly careful that it may not be polluted by the defiling fingers of error, ſhould we not alſo feel a holy ſolicitude, that it may not be mutilated or defaced by the rude hand of Ignorance? But though knowledge be ſo important and ſo neceſſary, it is not ſufficient of itſelf. The pale rays of the moon would bring neither graſs, nor corn, nor fruit to maturity. To accompliſh this, the Sun's genial beams muſt diffuſe their fructifying virtue over the face of the earth. In like manner to the light of knowledge, there muſt be added in a good miſſionary, the celeſtial heat of zeal; pure, ardent, perſevering zeal for the glory of God, and the ſalvation of man, muſt, like unexſtinguiſhed fire upon the altar, burn continually within his breaſt, unabated by all the difficulties and diſcouragements which from time to time ſet themſelves in array againſt him. I might add, that to theſe radical qualities, he ſhould join the wiſdom of the ſerpent, to the harmleſſneſs of the dove, the moſt exalted devotion, the moſt profound humility, unconquerable meekneſs, and patience under ſufferings, and trials, which nothing can ſubdue. Such are the men whom we wiſh to ſend to the Heathen. To find

them

them will be, we muſt own, a matter of very great difficulty; but the difficulty is not inſurmountable. Such men have been found. There were many ſuch in the primitive ages of the church, not only in the days of the Apoſtles, but likewiſe in ſucceeding centuries, long after miracles and the gift of tongues had ceaſed to accompany the preachers of the Goſpel. What has been may be again. There are juſt the ſame materials to work upon; and the ſame artificer as of old. Human nature is juſt the ſame as then: if it be not better, it is not worſe. Chriſtians, too, are the ſame: there are the ſame divine principles in the word of God, and the ſame almighty Grace in the Holy Spirit, to make them what they were in ancient days. Why then ſhould not as good miſſionaries be produced now as of old? Miniſters are found who are faithful, and zealous, and ſucceſsful: but the ſame grand qualities are required in them as in miſſionaries, and it deſerves enquiry, whether it may not be laid down as a general remark, "that the ſame talents "and diſpoſitions, which form a good miniſter "in England, would, by a difference of application, "and by adaption to ſtudies, objects, and purſuits, "ſomewhat varying in kind, have formed a good "and uſeful miſſionary for the ſervice of the Hea-"then. Beſides, miſſionaries have been formed by other ſocieties. The Danes, the Scots, the Moravians, have not been ſuffered to leave their plans abortive for want of labourers: and have not we as extenſive a field of ſelection as any of them can boaſt of?

If we enter into a conſideration of the requiſite attainments, we ſhall find nothing inſiſted on, that is impoſſible. To learn the language of the heathen is neceſſary for a miſſionary. But do not ten thouſands learn foreign tongues for amuſement, or for gain; and will the love of Chriſt and of ſouls be found a leſs powerful motive for exertion. Self denial is of indiſpenſable neceſſity. But do we not

ſee men practice it from inferior conſiderations? They bid adieu to their deareſt friends; they croſs the mighty ocean; they dwell in the moſt ſultry climates; they aſſociate with the rude and barbarous inhabitants; and are for many years deprived of that ſociety which was ſo ſweet to them in their native land, and for what, to amaſs wealth. And will not the certain proſpect of treaſures in Heaven, and of one of the brighteſt crowns of glory, animate the Chriſtian miſſionary to ſubmit to ſimilar hardſhips and reſtraints? Nor is this grace peculiar to him; for in what part of the world can a man be a good miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt, without the exerciſe of much ſelf denial in his work? Patience and zeal are required of a miſſionary in an abundant degree. But do we not ſee them exerciſed by the man of the world, to attain the object of their purſuits? How many are there now in India who have been for twenty years patiently and zealouſly following the wiſhed-for prize. And when we conſider this, ſhall we not be aſhamed to object that we are afraid we ſhall not be able to find miſſionaries who will be patient and zealous, when labouring in the work of the Lord, that he may ſee of the travel of his ſoul and be ſatisfied. To make the way of ſalvation known to Pagans how difficult, yet abſolutely neceſſary! all good miniſters feel ſomething of this in conveying divine inſtruction to the young and to the ignorant. Beſides, does the adventurous trader continue to make himſelf underſtood by the naked Savages, if we have aught to buy or to ſell; and though the ſubject be more difficult, cannot the miſſionary let it be known that he brings the glad tidings of ſalvation to them, and that they are required to come and buy it without money and without price? Though hard, this is not impoſſible, for he who created the ſoul of man, framed the goſpel of Chriſt. And he made them ſo to correſpond to each other, as that the ſoul ſhould be large enough to

receive

receive the goſpel, and men of the moſt ordinary capacity in Heathen lands ſhould be able to underſtand it.

But where, it may be ſaid, are thoſe miſſionaries? Can you point them out? Had Chriſt, before he called his diſciples, informed one of the Jewiſh Rabbies that he wanted twelve men to ſend into all the world, and convert the nations to the faith of his goſpel, would not the wiſe Rabbi have ſmiled at the ſuppoſed folly, and have ſaid, "where are theſe "twelve men to be found? They have not yet "breathed the breath of life." But when Chriſt wanted theſe, he ſoon found them, and in ſituations where no proud Rabbi ſince his time would have looked for them. And after keeping them in his academy for three years and a half, where they received lectures in theology, and ſaw every principle diſplayed, and every rule exemplified in his life and at his death, he filled them with his ſpirit, and ſent them forth to bring the nations into ſubjection to him. How well qualified they were for the office both their writings and the ſucceſs of their miniſtry afford a ſatisfactory proof. And cannot our Lord with equal eaſe find out miſſionaries now? He can and will. As ſoon as they are wanted theſe objectors may be convinced that Jeſus will call them, put the deſire into their heart, and they will offer themſelves willingly for his ſervice. Indeed I believe that not a few have already diſcovered an earneſt deſire to be employed in this arduous but glorious work. In fine, if it be but conſidered with ſerious attention, that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, when he aſcended up on high, received gifts for men on purpoſe to qualify them for every employment in his church, even the moſt difficult; and that it is his office, and will be his delight to fit miſſionaries for pulling down the thrones of Satan, and extending the kingdom of the Redeemer, certainly the

objection

objection will be withdrawn. Perhaps ſome may even object.

VII. Whence will the ſociety and the miſſionaries be able to find ſupport?

I cannot think the main difficulty lies here. Conſiderable funds will indeed be neceſſary; but they will be alſo readily provided. When folly and vanity call for ſupport, no lack of money is obſerved When an opera houſe or a theatre are to be erected, is it found impoſſible to provide funds? And if theſe haunts of mere amuſement can be raiſed with eaſe, ſhall it be an inſuperable difficulty to procure a ſum of money to convey inſtruction neceſſary to the happineſs of immortal ſouls? If the lovers of vanity be thus liberal to gratify a forlorn and depraved taſte, ſhall not we who profeſs to love God and Chriſt, and the ſouls of men, exert ourſelves, and contribute of our ſubſtance to attain the higheſt ends which a creature can poſſibly purſue, the end for which Jeſus ſhed his blood upon the croſs? Are thouſands of profeſſing Chriſtians riding in chariots, and ſhall ſupport be wanting for miſſionaries to travel in the apoſtolical mode for the converſion of the heathen? "Is it time for "you (ſays the prophet in the context to the Jews "of old) to dwell in cieled houſes, and this houſe "lye waſte?" The ſame argument would I urge. Many of you dwell in ſplendid houſes, elegantly furniſhed, and ſome have more than one; and have you nothing to beſtow towards building the houſe of the Lord of hoſts? Others are growing rich through the bounty of Providence; and have you nothing to ſpare for Chriſt and his cauſe? It cannot be. It is needleſs to urge the matter. In this manner had I purpoſed to reaſon with you. But to my unſpeakable joy, you have rendered theſe few hints almoſt needleſs by the many examples of generoſity which have far exceeded our expectations. Here we have already beheld, and there certainly

certainly we ſhall ſtill behold the triumphs of Chriſtian benevolence, and the liberal free will offerings of pious zeal. The abundant oblation of the affluent; the generous contribution of the induſtrious, the day labourer's pence, and the widow's mite, will furniſh a ſacred treaſure ſufficiently ample for building the houſe of the Lord in all its glory, and for providing ſupport to thoſe who miniſter in the ſanctuary from year to year till the heathen ſay: "It is enough."

An VIIIth objection urged by many is: "There "is no door opened in Providence, for the en- "trance of the goſpel: We ſhould wait till ſuch an "event take place," and then diligently improve it.

Is not this founded in a miſtake? Certainly a door is opened in Providence; and we are called upon to enter in. Formerly, in the dark ages, nations had little intercourſe with one another; and ſuch as were ſeparated by the ſea, or by countries intervening, ſcarcely knew of each others' exiſtence. But ſince the invention of the mariner's compaſs, every part of the globe has been explored; nearly all the tribes of the earth have been brought into view, and ſome kind of intercourſe eſtabliſhed with them. And for what end is all this? Was America diſcovered to our view, that thoſe inhuman ruffians who firſt landed on her ſhores, might rob the inhabitants of their country, murder them by millions, and ſend the few that remained into the bowels of the earth to dig for gold to allay the cravings of their accurſed avarice? Were thy coaſts, O Africa, unveiled to our eyes, that Chriſtian merchants, ſanctioned by Chriſtian legiſlatures, might drag thy unoffending ſons and daughters from their native ſoil, and all the tender charities of life, to be bondmen and bondwomen in their diſtant colonies, till welcome death put an end to the bitterneſs of ſorrow, and proclaimed deliverance from the galling yoke? No one that has the

ſpirit of man within him will dare to aſſert the impious falſehood. Do ye think, ye men of literature and philoſophy, that the chief deſign is to gratify your curioſity, to make your maps more full, your ſyſtems of geography more compleat, and your hiſtories of man in his various forms and inſtitutions more perfect? Do ye ſuppoſe, ye men of commerce, that the great end of God in this diſpenſation is, that the manufactures of England might find a more extenſive and profitable market, and that the commodities furniſhed by theſe diſtant lands might miniſter to our convenience, luxury, and affluence? No; theſe are the falſe imaginations of worldly men who ſee objects through a diſtorted medium. The true ſtate of the caſe is this. God in his Providence has diſcovered theſe nations to us, and given us intercourſe with them, that a door might thereby be opened for the entrance of the goſpel, and that meſſengers might be ſent to them with the joyful tidings of ſalvation by the croſs of Chriſt. Nay the very diſcovery of them, is the hand of God opening the door, and a loud call to the lovers of the goſpel to enter in, and labour for the ſalvation of periſhing ſouls. Philoſophers account the mere diſcovery of theſe diſtant countries, a door opened for them to go in, and reap all the improvements which ſcience can poſſibly collect. Merchants think the mere diſcovery, a door opened wide enough for them to go in, and purchaſe from the inhabitants, the commodities of their country, and diſpoſe of their own in return. And after this ſhall we hear chriſtians whine that a door is not opened to the heathen for them to enter in, and ſtrenuouſly exert themſelves for the ſalvation of guilty and miſerable men? For ſhame brethren, ſhall it be ſaid that the love of ſcience, and the love of gain are more powerful in their principles, more active in their exertions, and leſs cold and formal in ſeeking an introduction to the heathen, and cultivating

tivating a friendly intercourſe with them, than chriſtian zeal, and the love of immortal ſouls!

What door, I would aſk, do you wiſh to be opened to you? what do you effect? what can you expect more than is already done? We have the Goſpel. They have ſouls to be ſaved. We know how to convey it to them. We can learn their language to teach them religion, juſt as readily as another can to acquire wealth, and ſo have a door of utterance. And by humble and fervent prayer, we may hope for the Divine bleſſing and God's powerful aid, to convert the ſinner and give a door of entrance. What more then can we require? what is neceſſary beſides, to conſtitute an open door? Do you expect they will ſend for us to come to them? But how can that be, ſeeing they are ignorant of the goſpel, and know not, unhappy creatures! what the invaluable bleſſing is which they need, and which we have to beſtow upon them?

Some men in the courſe of life, meet with uncommon events, or miracles in Providence; and are therefore ready to look for ſomething extraordinary in the way of direction and encouragement. But this is not God's common method in the government of the world; nay not even in his diſpenſations towards the church. If you read the hiſtory of the planting of chriſtianity, you will find in a very few inſtances God giving his Apoſtles particular directions to whom to go, and where to preach. But ordinarily there was nothing of this: they went forth led by the dictates of chriſtian providence, and chriſtian zeal, wherever there were precious ſouls, and preached the word, the Lord working with them. From an accurate peruſal of eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, it appears that this has been the way ever ſince, in all the efforts which have been made to propagate the goſpel, even in the moſt remarkable ſeaſons. What open door had

Luther,

Luther, Zwinglius, and Calvin to preach the pure doctrine of the croſs to the millions ſunk in ignorance and ſuperſtition? Were they guided and authorized by viſions and revelations of the Lord? or did they at firſt find men inviting them to expoſe the errors of Popery, and to feed them with evangelical doctrine! No, it was while they preached, that people were convinced of their errors, and embraced the truth. And this may be conſidered as a general rule. Before the miniſters of Jeſus ſet out to preach, matters have been preciſely in the ſame ſituation as now with us. Providence unbarred her gate, and ſhewed them where there were ſouls to be ſaved, and this was all the encouragement ſhe gave. But when they had gone forth, and were preaching the word, God opened a door of faith, removed obſtacles out of the way, and gave efficacy to the word of his grace, and this frequently, where at firſt there were the moſt unpleaſing appearances, and the moſt violent oppoſition; if theſe things be ſeriouſly reviewed, it will no longer be objected, that a door is not opened for the preaching of the Goſpel to the Heathen.

IX. It is objected by ſome, "what right have "we to interfere with the religion of other nati-"ons?

Some think it enough, if people have a religion, and if they be ſincere in it, they conclude, that they ſhall certainly be ſaved, no matter of what kind the religion is. This diſcovers the loweſt abyſs of mental ſtupidity, and an utter ignorance of the nature of God and virtue. Is there not a difference in things themſelves; will poiſon nouriſh the body, like wholeſome food? Will a ſpell or a charm, heal diſeaſes, like an efficacious medicine? Will darkneſs ſerve to ſhew a traveller his way as well as light? If a man ſets out on a journey and advances with diligence, does it not matter, whether he be on the right road? Is there no difference between

truth

truth and error, between verity and falſehood, between right and wrong? Can the infinitely wiſe God, be pleaſed with a religion full of ridiculous abſurdities? Can a holy God be delighted with a homage, which does not proceed from holy diſpoſitions, and which has no tendency to produce them? Can a righteous God ever accept ſervices which give no honour to his rectitude; but on the contrary, trample it under foot? Can a good and gracious God, look with approbation on a ritual, ſanguinary in its nature, and nouriſhing the ſeeds of enmity and revenge, and where there is not a ſpark of benevolence, or love to God, and love to man? If after this, a perſon will ſtill maintain, that it matters not what a man's religion is, provided he be ſincere, to argue with him, is to looſe both time and labour.

But ſome who acknowledge the religion of "the "Heathen to be bad," ſtill ſay, "what right have "we to interfere?" If report ſpeak truth, this was urged in the firſt aſſembly of a Chriſtian land, by a great name in the *literary*, nay in the *religious*, or rather in the *eccleſiaſtical* world. How little weight there is in the objection, when ever, or by whomſoever urged, will be evident, when you conſider, that we have an authority, paramount to every other; the authority of Jehovah himſelf, for carrying the Goſpel to the Heathen, and not only his authority, but his expreſs command, which makes us criminal if we diſobey. "Go," ſays the Son of God, to his diſciples, Matt. xxviii, 19, "go, teach all nations, baptizing them "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and "of the Holy Ghoſt; teaching them to obſerve "all things whatſoever I have commanded you, "and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the "end of the world, Amen." Such is the commiſſion, and it muſt abide in force, till it be executed, that is, till all nations be taught, and with reſpect to time, until the end of the world, ſhould the

the deſign not be accompliſhed ſooner. As the nations are not yet all taught the religion of Jeſus, it is evident, that the obligation to teach them, is in force on us, as his diſciples; and we have the higheſt authority to proceed in the work, and to interfere with the religion of the heathen nations.

But to deſcend from authority to reaſoning: Is not active benevolence, one of the grand principles of Chriſtianity? I never felt the obligation to exerciſe it in an extenſive degree, as I do now; and, I fear we have all greatly neglected this part of duty. Benevolence teaches us to do good, both to the bodies and ſouls of man; and the numerous diſtreſſes, and miſeries, which overſpread the earth, are loud calls to every Chriſtian's benevolence for relief, and to his utmoſt exertions if poſſible, to leſſen or remove them. If a country were ſtarving from a grievous famine, would it be a culpable interference, to freight a veſſel, and ſend them our bread to eat? And if their ſouls be ſtarving from a famine of the word of God, ſhall it be accounted wrong, to convey to them the bread of life? Did peſtilential diſeaſe ravage an unhappy land, and there was no medical man to adminiſter relief; if a phyſician ſhould kindly go to diſpenſe a ſovereign remedy, and reſtore the ſick to health, would it be an improper interference? And if by the raging of the mortal malady of ſin, the whole head be ſick, the whole heart faint, and miſerable Pagans ready to periſh, is it blameable to attempt to heal and ſave their diſeaſed ſouls? If we heard, that in a Pagan country, ſuperſtition and fanaticiſm, brought annually to the altar, a hundred thouſand men and women, would an attempt in ſome ardent philanthropiſt, to convince them of the folly and wickedneſs of the barbarous cuſtom be a criminal interference with the religion of the infatuated people? And ſhall the endeavours of Chriſtian benevolence to ſave hundreds of thouſands of periſhing ſinners among the

Pagans

Pagans from the miſeries of the ſecond death, be branded with this defaming name of a meddler in other men's matters? If a nation were ignorant of the arts of civilized life, and of thoſe diſcoveries which contribute to human happineſs, would it be a culpable interference for a ſociety to ſend perſons to teach men to ſow and plant, to build houſes, and procure abundance of every comfort? And ſhall a crime be imputed to theſe who would teach rude Pagans, ignorant of all the arts of the ſpiritual life, the ſcience of faith in a Saviour, the art of holy living, ſo as to pleaſe God, the way of maintaining fellowſhip with the Father, and with his ſon Jeſus Chriſt, and the certain method of ſecuring eternal bleſſedneſs beyond the grave? riſe up now thou who uttereſt the objection, and ſay, what man, or body of men have obtained a patent from Heaven, to ſtop the current of Chriſtian benevolence from flowing through the place of their abode, or to concenter and perpetuate miſery in the country where they dwell? Stand forth, and ſpeak before the thouſands who ſurround thee. But thou art wiſe to hide thy head for ſhame, and conceal thy folly. Once more,

X. Others ſay: "We have Heathens enough at "home, let us convert them firſt before we go "abroad."

That there are vaſt multitudes in England, as ignorant as Heathens, it is painful to be compelled to acknowledge. That every method ſhould be employed for their inſtruction and ſalvation, what Chriſtian will not loudly affirm. But do you mean by the objection, that all the people at home ſhould be converted before we go abroad? This mode of arguing would effectually prevent proceeding in the villages too, becauſe thoſe who are in town, may on theſe principles ſay, "There are hundreds "in the neighbouring ſtreets, ſtill in a ſtate of impe-"nitence, why therefore ſhould I go out into the

"places around, while there are so many wicked "people at my door." Such reasoning, and such conduct would hinder the progress of the Gospel in the world, and restrain that active benevolence to which God has here assigned some peculiar service, and to which he has proposed objects so numerous and important.

The Apostles did neither argue nor act in this way, else they had never gone beyond the bounds of Jerusalem or Judah; and the Gentiles had remained ignorant of the gospel unto this hour. Had Peter said: "There are unbelieving enough "in the land of Canaan, let us convert them first, "before we go to the Gentiles," what would have become of these who were not of the seed of Abraham? or if Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles, when he went down to Antioch, and preached in that populous city, had, if requested to go into Greece or Italy, made this reply; why should I? there are a hundred thousand heathens in Antioch: It is needless for me to go further, as long as I live. What would then have become of us, or of all who live in these remote parts of the earth? But this objection is not derived either from apostolical reasoning or conduct. They were itinerant preachers: They travelled from city to city, and from country to country. Wherever they went, they scattered the seed of the word, made converts, formed them into a church, and then removed to some other place, where the sound of the gospel had not been heard. This has likewise been the method in all remarkable revivals of religion, as at the reformation from Popery, and in more limited effusions of the holy spirit on particular lands. Besides, it is with a bad grace indeed that the objection is offered among us. For more than two hundred years has the gospel been preached in England: And now, when it is proposed to send it to Pagan nations, an objection is raised, in order

to quench the ſacred fire of pious zeal. What have you been doing all your days in converting the heathen in the dark places of England? If nothing—with what face could ye object to this benevolent plan? If ſomething—then go on at home, while others labour abroad: And both domeſtic and foreign heathens will receive unſpeakable benefit. That apoſtolical man Brainerd mentions that the converſion of the Indians had a very happy effect on ſome of the people in America, by producing a ſolemn fear leſt they ſhould be rejected and caſt off. Singular advantages will, I truſt, reſult to the people of England from the ſucceſsful exertion of our plan, and the zealous efforts of our Miſſionaries among the diſtant and unenlightened nations of the earth.

I have now conſidered every objection which appeared likely to be raiſed: Shall I flatter myſelf that I have given a ſatisfactory anſwer? Where prejudice and diſlike to the cauſe propoſed the difficulties, it is not to be expected that I ſhould prevail. But where the objections have been made by candid and impartial minds, which had not weighed the matter attentively, nor had ſufficient means of information, I would fain hope I have not ſpoken in vain.

Is there then no difficulty in the way but may be ſurmounted, let me entreat you all, my brethren, to exert yourſelves to the utmoſt in this glorious work? There is but one privilege I know of, which we have above the ſaints in heaven. It conſiſts in a capacity of being inſtrumental in the converſion of ſinners to God. With what avidity ſhould we improve it? An opportunity now preſents itſelf: Embrace it without delay. I need not inform you that there is one way in which you may all promote it—*by your prayers*. Here let all unite. Whenever you enter into your cloſet, let there be one ſupplication for the bleſſing of God on the

miſſionary ſociety. Remember it always in your family devotions: And let it never be forgotten in public worſhip. While it is not forgotten, ſee that you offer up the effectual fervent prayer of faith. It has been remarked by ſome, that in theinterceſſory part of prayer, the devotion of the aſſembly has been moſt relaxed: let us aim that the obſervation may no more have place; but that then the ſouls of the worſhippers may burn with peculiar ardour. Your pecuniary aid I need not urge; when called upon, your generoſity will be diſplayed. And if dire neceſſity ſhould prevent any of you from performing this act of benevolence, it will, I am ſure, fill you with regret to be obliged to withhold your hand in ſo good a cauſe. Cultivate a ſpirit of zeal for the proſperity of the kingdom of Chriſt in the world; and ſeek to have your ſouls enlarged in ardent deſires for the ſalvation of precious ſouls. Recommend this glorious cauſe to others. Intereſt in it as many as you can; and ſtrive to kindle in the breaſts of all around you that ardour of zeal which you yourſelves feel. Thus will it ſpread from ſoul to ſoul; and the number of thoſe who pray and long for the converſion of the Heathen, be greatly increaſed. Conſider this, I beſeech you, for it is not conſidered by any of us as it ought: "one important idea conceived in the mind of an "individual, and uttered with energy in converſa-"tion, will ſwiftly fly from man to man, till in the "ſpace of a year it has enlightened the underſtand-"ing, warned the hearts, and given a direction to "the conduct of thouſands: and it is ſtill in a pro-"greſſive ſtate of extenſion. In proceſs of time "it may influence a nation, and a world."

To find miſſionaries for the ſervice of the heathen as it is a matter of the laſt conſequence, ſo it is a thing in which all ſhould give their aid. There are many whom modeſty conceals from public view that would be good meſſengers of the goſpel of

peace. The man who ſhall point out one of theſe will render us an eſſential ſervice. Bleſſed are ye among men, women, who have children, that ſhall dedicate themſelves to the ſervice of the Lord Jeſus among the idolatrous nations. Had I a ſon arrived at years of maturity who was qualified for the office, I ſhould feel the moſt delicious ſenſations at ſeeing him offer himſelf as a miſſionary to the heathen, and embark for India, or ſome remote iſland in the moſt diſtant ſea. I ſhould think him better provided for, than if he went to Hindoſtan, under the moſt powerful patronage, with the faireſt proſpect of affluence and honours. And ſhould he at ſome fitter time return for a ſeaſon, and in giving you an account of his miniſtry be able to ſay to you, "There are hundreds of perſons in the place from "which I came, who have been converted by the "miniſtry of the word; and whom God hath ho-"noured me to turn from idols, to ſerve the "living and true God, and to wait for his ſon, from "heaven, even Jeſus who delivereth us from the "wrath to come," I ſhould eſteem it a greater honour to myſelf, and a greater happineſs to him, than if he were to viſit his native land with the princely treaſures and the eaſtern ſplendour of a Haſtings or a Clive. But how great will our obligations be to thoſe who, having received from the god of providence and grace, the grand qualities of good miſſionaries, ſhall come forward and offer themſelves for the work of the Lord. Honourable indeed, among men, honourable in the eyes of angels and of God will our firſt miſſionaries be. Hail ye bleſſed of the Lord, I I admire your choice: I feel a veneration for you, may the Lord go with you, and bleſs you; and what you loſe in the pleaſures of civilized ſociety, may you find more than compenſated in fellowſhip with God, and in ſeeing your labours crowned with abundant ſucceſs. Delightful will it be to you to

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be ſurrounded with your converts, and to find in them fathers and mothers, ſiſters and brothers, ſons and daughters, relatives and friends. Your place in heaven will be near to apoſtles, martyrs, and reformers; and your crowns ſhine with ſuperior luſtre. We who are merely ſtated paſtors in churches already formed, look up to you as our ſuperiors, and honour you as diſplaying that dignified temper and conduct which places you high in the ſcale of moral excellence.

Why ſhould we be caſt down at the proſpect of difficulties in the way? Let our whole dependence be placed in the wiſdom, power, and grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. He can exalt every valley, level every mountain and hill, make the way to places plain, and the crooked ſtraight; and by removing every ſtumbling block, prepare the rough for his ſervants, and make the triumph of the croſs, glorious in the eyes of the nations of the earth. To attempt is noble. To fail here is more honourable than to ſucceed in moſt other purſuits. Should we fail of ſucceſs, while we may be grieved that the Heathen are ſtill to remain in darkneſs, we ſhall have no reaſon to repent of our undertaking. Will the future part of our life roll on more unhappy or diſreputable, becauſe we attempted without effect to extend the boundaries of the kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt? will it tinge our cheeks with ſhame, when we are laid upon a death bed, that we were ſtrenuouſly engaged in an unſucceſsful effort, to ſpread the knowledge of Chriſt among the Heathen? or will it cover us with bluſhes when we approach the throne of God at the judgment, to have it ſaid by an attending ſpirit, "That man was an ardent ſupporter "of an unſucceſsful ſociety, whoſe object was to "bring the Heathen to ſeek ſalvation through the "blood of the Redeemer's croſs."

But I hope better things, even the ſucceſs of our plan for the ſalvation of the Heathen, though I thus

thus ſpeak. Yet miſtake me not, diſcouragements, many and great we may meet with, and perhaps want of ſucceſs where our hopes are moſt ſanguine. Nay Providence may ſeem to frown on our attempts, the ears of Jehovah to be ſhut againſt our prayers, and ſeaſons roll on with little proſpect of advantage. Be not caſt down at this, nor ſurprized if ſcoffers laugh loud amidſt their deriſion of our folly. Why that deſpondency? whence came that impious whiſper: "we may "now give up all for loſt." Remember God ſeeth not as man ſeeth: He worketh not as man worketh, and he accompliſhes his plans in a way peculiar to himſelf. In thoſe deſigns which are moſt pleaſing in his ſight, and to which he has determined the moſt favourable iſſue, it frequently happens that it is not till after a trial of perſevering faith and patience, that He gives ſucceſs; and when He does give it, it is *where* and *when*, and in a manner we did not expect. Succeſs in God's place, and time and way, I do look for on our efforts: we have every encouraging reaſon to build our hopes upon, and if we ſhould ſucceed, O how delightful the proſpect which riſes to our view! Idolatrous Pagans changed into Chriſtians who worſhip God in ſpirit and in truth. Churches formed of worſhippers of ſtocks and ſtones; and prayers and praiſes aſcending to God and to the Lamb in lands where the voice of Jehovah was never mentioned before. What joy muſt there be in heaven, when the ſaints and angels there look down and behold the glorious change! Who can expreſs the delight that we ſhall feel to ſee our miſſionaries viſit us after revolving years, accompanied by ſome of their converts, preſenting the *Gods* of the Heathen, which their former worſhippers have ſent as ſymbols of the triumphs of the croſs, and unequivocal evidences of their contempt for idolatry, and that they now treat with deriſion theſe things which were once deemed moſt ſacred.

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How ſweet an employment to hear them recount the great things which God hath been pleaſed to do by their miniſtry, and expreſſing an anxious wiſh to return to their dear children in the Lord, animated with the moſt ardent deſire to extend more widely the boundaries of the Mediator's kingdom; how reviving to receive accounts of encreaſing ſucceſs from year to year! And ſhould we, through the mercy of God in Chriſt, reach the world of glory, what exſtacy ſhall we feel at ſeeing multitudes of converted Pagans enter heaven, of whom it is proclaimed, that they owe their knowledge of ſalvation to our preſent meeting. To conclude, this year will, I hope form an epoch in the hiſtory of man; and from this day by our exertions, and by the exertions of others whom we ſhall provoke to zeal, the kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt, ſhall be conſiderably enlarged both at home and abroad, and continue to encreaſe " till the knowledge of God " cover the earth as the waters cover the ſea." When we left our homes, we expected to ſee a day of ſmall things which it was our deſign not to deſpiſe, but to cheriſh with fond ſolicitude. But God has beyond meaſure exceeded our expectations: He has made a little one a thouſand, and has inſpired us with the moſt exalted hopes. Now we do not think ourſelves in danger of being miſtaken when we ſay that we ſhall account it through eternity a diſtinguiſhed favour, and the higheſt honour conferred on us during our pilgrimage on earth, that we appeared here and gave in our names among the *Founders of the Miſſionary Society*, and the time will be ever remembered by us, and may it be celebrated by future ages, as the ÆRA OF CHRISTIAN BENEVOLENCE.

A MEMOIR

A

# MEMOIR

ON THE MOST ELIGIBLE PART TO BEGIN

## *A MISSION,*

AND

THE MOST PROBABLE MEANS OF ACCOMPLISHING IT:

BEING THE

## SUBSTANCE OF A DISCOURSE

DELIVERED IN

SURRY-STREET CHAPEL,

BEFORE THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

*September* 24, 1795,

By the Rev. T. HAWEIS, L. L. B.

RECTOR OF ALL-SAINTS, ALDWINKLE, AND CHAPLAIN TO THE LATE COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON.

# A MEMOIR

## ON THE MOST ELIGIBLE PART

## TO BEGIN A MISSION, &c.

GLORY to God! Let unbelief be confounded. If he will work none can let it. Is it poſſible any longer to doubt, that this hath God done? How often hath it been ſuggeſted, if the Lord would make windows in Heaven, then might theſe things be. Lo! the windows in Heaven are opened, and the Angels of the Churches deſcend.

Who ever expected, which of the moſt ſanguine dared to hope they ſhould ever ſee ſuch days as the preſent, and the preceding? When was ever ſuch an aſſemblage of the miniſters of Chriſt, collected in this land *? Every partition wall is broken down, and every heart big with expectation, that the time approaches, when the great Redeemer of loſt ſouls will receive the Heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the world for his poſſeſſion.

Methinks I ſee the great Angel of the covenant in the midſt of us, pluming his wings, and ready to fly through the midſt of Heaven, with his own everlaſting Goſpel, to every nation, and tribe, and tongue, and people. Rev. xiv. 6.

Yes, ye dear children of our common parent, too long neglected by us; black, though comely, beneath a more vertical Sun, the fulneſs of time is come; redeemed by the ſame price as ourſelves to you ſhall the word of Salvation be ſent: we ſtretch

* About two or three hundred miniſters were ſuppoſed to be in the circle.

out our arms to embrace you, come ſhare our mercies, in Jeſus, and be bleſſed. *Break forth, into joy, ſing together ye waſte places, for the Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all nations, and all the ends of the earth ſhall ſee the ſalvation of our God.*

The moment of ſuſpence is paſt, it is decided by you, that a miſſion to the Heathen ſhall be attempted. The deſirableneſs, the neceſſity, the practicability, of ſuch a miſſion, you have heard from our brethren, who have ſpoken in the name of the Lord. Their luminous views preſented to us, powerful, impreſſive as various, like different rays converging to a focus, have kindled in every heart, "*the ſpirit of* "*burning**." The glory of the Lord is gone up over the ſanctuary,—the camp is in motion,--the Levites bear the veſſels,--the great commander ſaith, "GO FORWARD." When the pillar and the cloud thus guide our ſteps, there ſhall be a highway in the deſert, and the boſom of the great deep again open a way for the ranſomed to paſs over.

It would be preſumption to ſuppoſe, I can add any thing to the force of my brethren's diſcourſes. The time is come, a miſſion is determined; at preſent it only devolves on me to ſuggeſt to your conſideration, what I had hinted before.

1. Where the moſt promiſing opening appears for a beginning.

2. What means are to be employed.

I wiſh ſome one of my abler brethren were in my place, but I obey their commands, for their wiſhes at preſent muſt command obedience, aſſured that their wiſdom will mature, their prudence correct, their courage execute, and their patient perſeverance perfect, all that ſhall be neceſſary to ſo noble, yet ſo vaſt an undertaking.

* Iſa. iv. 4.

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The field before us is immenſe. O that we could enter at a thouſand gates: that every limb were a tongue, and every tongue a trumpet to ſpread the joyful ſound! where ſo very conſiderable a part of the habitable globe on every ſide calls for our efforts, and like the man of Macedonia cries, "Come over "and help us;" it is not a little difficult to decide at what point to begin.

1. Then, WHERE SHALL WE COMMENCE A MISSION.

Two things naturally will come into conſideration: 1. Where the difficulties are leaſt. And 2. Where the proſpect of ſucceſs is greateſt.

We ſhall by many probably be regarded as men highly enthuſiaſtic, and our deſign ridiculed, as Utopian, but gentlemen, were I merely to preſent YOU to their notice, ſuch an aſſemblage of wiſe, as well as good men, ought to check the daring imputations of ridicule or cenſure. It will be ſeen I hope, that whilſt we acknowledge our dependance entirely on the ſpirit of God for ſucceſs, we are exerciſing every faculty of our underſtanding, to plan with judgment, and execute with prudence. Nor has the object been the haſty ebullition of zeal without knowledge, but the deliberate determination of minds, that have long weighed the neceſſity of the undertaking, and deeply conſidered the ſteps which humanly ſpeaking, may be judged by every man of reaſon and religion, as practicable, as, they muſt be admitted to be deſirable.

1. WHERE THE DIFFICULTIES ARE LEAST.

What are the grand difficulties to a miſſion among the Heathens?

1. AN INHOSPITABLE CLIMATE. Whether from humidity---intenſe heat or cold--each alike unfriendly to conſtitutions, that have not been inured to ſuch great and ſudden changes: and the preſervation of a miſſionary's life is of the laſt importance to our ſucceſs.

Such

Such climates alſo are often as unfriendly to the *means of ſubſiſtence*, the eaſy acquiſition of which is of material conſequence, as *the time* of a miſſionary, as far as poſſible, ſhould neither be engroſſed with labour, nor his attention diſtracted, and his anxiety exercised about his own or his family's proviſion. I do not ſay, that true miſſionary patience and perſeverance may not vanquiſh theſe, and every other difficulty; we have ſeen it done by our brethren the Moravians in the moſt horrid regions of the earth. But whilſt I never can ſpeak ſufficiently high of their zeal, it becomes us, who have the world before us, to chuſe our points of attempt, where, as much as poſſible, neither unneceſſary difficulties may be encountred, nor unneceſſary danger incurred. Enough of both will attach to every commencement, ſufficient to diſcourage any heart, that is not full of faith, and truly reſting on the ROCK, which is higher than we. Such men indeed, we may confidently hope, whatever the danger or difficulty may be, will boldly ſay in the words of the prophet, "Who art thou, "O great mountain, before Zerubbabel thou ſhalt "become a plain."

2. ABSOLUTE GOVERNMENTS. The intruſion of ſtrangers naturally awakens the fears of eſtabliſhed governments, and the intrigues of prieſtcraft, even among Heathens, are in many places as dangerous, and fiercely carried on, as in the church of Rome. They fear for their Foe, and Amida*, as much as theſe for their Pope, and idols. A miſſionary could not enter ſome countries, without a moral certainty of being murdered. I mention China, and Japan, becauſe the immenſe population of both theſe countries makes them deſirable objects for a miſſion: Many others are in the ſame predicament.

* Idols worſhipped in China and Japan.

It

It is known, that though chriſtians have acceſs to both, they are guarded with the moſt ſcrupulous attention. A little iſland near Nangaſacki in Japan is allotted the Dutch, from which, on pain of death, no creature dares to move; when the annual ſhip arrives, a few are admitted under a guard into the city, till the ſhort traffic being compleated they are again priſoners for the ſake of gain, till the returning year. He is a dead man, that ſteps over the limits. It is the ſame at Canton in China; though the priſon is not quite ſo ſtrait, it is as effectual, and to tranſgreſs the bounds of either would alike be fatal; beſides the inutility even of the attempt, without a previous knowledge of theſe ſtrange and difficult languages. I agree with thoſe, who think a miſſionary is not fit for his work, if he cannot truely ſay, I count not my life dear unto myſelf, but it is no more correſpondent with chriſtian principles, than human prudence, to tempt God, where we are called only to truſt him in the path of duty. It is preſumption, not zeal, that would take the bull by the horns.

3. ESTABLISHED PREJUDICES of falſe religion. Nothing ſhall, I am confident, ultimately ſtand before the ſtandard of the croſs: I believe with Ezekiel, that God will "overturn, overturn, overturn, "them all, when HE ſhall come whoſe right it is." Ezek. xxi. 27. and the Lord haſten it in his time! but in the commencement of an infant work; (too long indeed, and ſhamefully hath it been neglected) in the commencement of an infant work, where we can embrace but a few objects, we ſhould chuſe the leaſt unfavourable.

Where civilization hath long obtained,--where falſe religions are deeply rooted--formed into caſts --and plead immemorial antiquity--theſe preſent a wall of braſs around the people. Such is particularly the caſe among the Hindoos. Mahometans, alſo, if they ſhould be ſuppoſed to be included under

under the name of Heathen, though profeſſing to worſhip only one God, have a ſeven fold barrier of prejudices againſt us. Would it not appear to be wiſdom, for a while at leaſt, to wait till ſome progreſs be made in a field more cultivable, and equally vaſt? Succeſs in this, would afford encouragements to proceed; and perhaps with the very people we may have formed; and thoſe nearer at hand, for the work.

I will only give a ſlight ſketch of Hindoſtan. There no danger would attend a miſſion,--there a miſſionary would have the company and ſupport of his countrymen who govern,--and if he ſhould faint, might always return to England, in the veſſels that croud the Ganges.

If I think it calls for a leſs portion of a miſſionary ſpirit to embrace ſuch a ſtation, and if I err in my apprehenſion of the proſpect of ſucceſs; no man more cordially embraces the brethren embarked in the attempt, or more heartily will rejoice to find myſelf miſtaken.

Hindoſtan is chiefly compoſed of two ſorts of people, the native inhabitants, the Hindoos, and their former conquerors, the Tartars,--the latter are Mahometans, the former idolaters, each hath a different language, beſides a vaſt diverſity of dialect. There is alſo a third language, the Perſian, which, like the French in Europe, is the genteel language of the ſuperior ranks, and alſo of the men of letters.

Reſpecting the Mahometans I ſhall ſay nothing, they not being the immediate object of our miſſion, but of the Hindoos, I would obſerve, that they are divided into four grand caſts, in each of which there are reſtrictions of ſuch a peculiar nature, reſpecting food, and Sacrifices, as well as deſcent, as render it equally impoſſible for a native to paſs into another caſt, as for a ſtranger to be admitted into either of them. If a man, by tranſgreſſing againſt

againſt the known, and rigidly enforced rules, loſes his caſt, he becomes an outcaſt from ſociety, the wife of his boſom, and his own children reject him with abhorrence, and he is compelled, in order not to be iſolated in the midſt of ſociety, to form a new connection, which in Bengal hath been generally done by becoming Mahometan. They will as readily become Chriſtian; but I apprehend no denomination of Chriſtians wiſhes for converts on ſuch a principle. With regard to the reſt, even to the loweſt caſt, the Biſe, they are as tenacious of their caſt, as the Bramin himſelf, and feel with equal horror the idea of loſing it.

No perſon who has not been in Hindoſtan, or who is not intimately acquainted with the ſtate of the country, can have an adequate idea of the difficulties attending a miſſion there, reſpecting its ſucceſs, for other difficulties there are little or none. All things we know, are poſſible with God.

Our brethren the Baptiſts have at preſent prevented our wiſhes; and though there is room for a thouſand miſſionaries, the engagements on our hands will, I preſume, lead us to hope for further intelligence from that quarter, and by the time that arrives, I wiſh we may be ready with a numerous hoſt for that or any other part of the earth.

4. THE ACQUIREMENT OF LANGUAGES. As we have no reaſon to expect the gift of tongues, the conſideration of the difficulties of this kind comes neceſſarily into our conſideration. On the coaſt of Africa, the different nations and tongues are ſo multiplied, near the coaſt, that in every few leagues of a voyage, a new Government, and a new language preſent themſelves. In the interior, the nations are more extenſive, and the language, of whatever difficulty of acquirement, more diffuſively underſtood. Three languages or more ſhould be known in India, by a miſſionary. The Chineſe language preſents difficulties nearly inſuperable, from

the amazing number of its characters, beſides the vigilance, and ſeverity of its government reſpecting foreigners; theſe ſeem at preſent to forbid the attempt among them. I might enlarge on the ſubject, but ſufficient has been ſaid reſpecting difficulties to be ſurmounted.

Secondly. WHAT FIELD OF GREATEST USEFULNESS ſeems to preſent the feweſt?

This is the next conſideration.

Of all the regions of the earth which are yet in heathen darkneſs, the South ſea Iſlands appear to combine the greateſt proſpects of ſucceſs, with the leaſt difficulties to be neceſſarily ſurmounted.

1. THE CLIMATE is ſufficiently known. I am afraid to ſpeak, what is recorded, leaſt ſome ſhould think I were painting a fairy land, a new garden of the Heſperides. Suffice it, therefore, to ſay, what is univerſally admitted, that the cold of winter is never known; the trees, I believe, hardly ever loſe their leaves, through the conſtant ſucceſſion of vegetation, and the greateſt part of the year, bear fruit; the heat, though a tropical country, is always alleviated by alternate breezes, whilſt they ſit under the ſhade of groves, odoriferous, as loaded with abundance; the ſky ſerene, the nights beautiful, and the ſea ever offering its inexhauſtible ſource of food, an eaſy and pleaſing conveyance, and a ſight generally admired.

Diſeaſes that ravage us are there unknown: we have indeed added fearfully to their number, yet health, and longevity mark the inhabitants in general, without the knowledge of medicines or phyſicians. If the frozen regions of the north, or the ſultry humid ſoil of Africa, be compared with theſe Iſlands, the difference of danger is immenſe, and a miſſionary's life, abundantly more likely to be preſerved in the one, than in the other.

Dependent on climate is THE EASINESS OF PROVISION. How readily that can be ſupplied in theſe iſlands,

iſlands, you need only read the concurring teſtimony of all who have written on the ſubject, and if they want our luxuries, the real neceſſaries of life, will there neither much engage a miſſionary's time or care. With the ſcience he carries, and the arts he practiſes, there is little apprehenſion to be entertained, that he will not, with any prudent attention, have enough and to ſpare.

And this is as advantageous for *the work* as for themſelves. The natives not harraſſed by labour for daily bread, or as ſlaves, worked under the laſh of the whip, are always ſure to have abundant time for inſtruction. We have not, as our brethren the Moravians, to follow them into the lonely wilds of a deſert in their hunting, or over the fields of ice in winter, few at beſt, and diſperſed. Here every man ſitting under his cocoa, or bread-fruit tree, is at hand, and the very ſound of a hammer, a ſaw, or a ſmith's bellows, will hardly ever fail to attract an audience. Two hundred thouſand inhabitants are reckoned in the little iſland of Otaheite alone; all ranged around its beautiful ſhores, and acceſſible by a thouſand canoes in every part, with a facility that no other road, ever can afford. I need not ſay *the multitude of the iſles will be glad thereof.* Their amount hath never yet been aſcertained. We have diſcovered many, but probably much greater numbers are ſtill unknown, which ſpot the boſom of the pacific ocean, on either ſide the line, from New South Wales to the coaſts of Peru. But I am only giving a ſketch, not a hiſtory.

I hardly know how to mention the GOVERNMENT, with which we are not perhaps perfectly acquainted. It ſeems monarchical, but of the mildeſt nature, with little authority, controuled as it appears by powerful vaſſals, each in his own diſtinct ſupreme, but with no written law, nor the uſe of letters, and preſents a ſort of patriarchal ſtate: where the diſorders ſeem ſo few, that the arm of authority is

but ſeldom exerted. Here, ſo far from having any thing to fear, or any danger of abiding, ſome have attempted at the hazard of their lives to obtain a retreat by ſwimming naked from our ſhips, and ſome determined to make their future home, by a conſpiracy, I was aſſured by the worthy captain who ſuffered, brought on by no diſguſt or diſlike to him, or the ſervice, but merely by the faſcinations of beauty, and the allurements of the country.

I ſpeak not this to invite or to diminiſh the dangers, there will be no doubt many, which I have not been able to diſcover, and there is one, perhaps, as hard to endure as a fiery ordeal. But the ſame God that enabled the three children to face the burning furnace, ſtrengthened Joſeph to eſcape from the equally dangerous ſollicitations of his miſtreſs. But this is a point I need not farther touch, whoever goes from us will be as fully apprized of, as guarded againſt their dangers. If God be with them, the ſtruggle againſt fleſh and blood will be as victorious, as over principalities, and powers, and the rulers of the darkneſs of this world.

In the uncivilized ſtate, in which the inhabitants of Otaheite and the neighbouring iſlands live, our ſuperority, in knowledge, and what they will at firſt be more ſtruck with, in the mechanic arts, we bring; theſe, will gain us probably ſuch reſpect, that without receiving a ſacrifice, as to the Eatoa, ſuch as was offered to Cook, we ſhall enjoy ſufficient importance with the higheſt as well as the loweſt of that people, and (in my conſcience, I ſpeak) we have more to apprehend from being careſſed and exalted, than from being inſulted and oppreſſed. It is a beautiful French proverb, the force of which will be felt in this caſe by every reflecting mind; Dans la pais des aveugles, les borgnes ſont rois.*

* In the regions of the blind, he who hath but one eye, will be monarch.

3. Reſpect-

3. Reſpecting their RELIGIOUS PREJUDICES. No nation of the earth, I believe, will be found without ſome traces of traditionary revelation. Every guilty creature feels the neceſſity of atonement in ſome ſhape or form. They have their victims, and their Gods: we are yet but little acquainted with theſe; but the little that we do know, affords the ſtrongeſt evidence, that their prieſts, if there are ſuch, are not inveſted with any perſecuting power, nor can the people be averſe to hear us on a religious ſubject, whom they reverence as their ſuperiors almoſt in every other. And the very ſlight traces, which we have obtained of the ſervice at their Moraïs, ſeem ſtrongly to imply the ſuppoſition of a future exiſtence, and the neceſſity of placating as well as pleaſing an offended God.

I cannot here expatiate on this ſubject, the miſſionaries ſhall always have my ſentiments at large for their information.

Reſpecting LANGUAGE. I have a vocabulary, formed of all the words diſperſed through the voyages which have been publiſhed, and if I judge from its vocal ſtructure, it is of no difficult attainment. I am aſſured a corporal of Marines, after three months ſtay on the iſland, ſpoke it fluently. If any Engliſhman be there, or in the adjacent iſlands, they muſt by this time be perfectly acquainted with it. (Oh that we may bring them to repentance!) ſuch may become our inſtructors, or interpreters, and with a little application, I hope, our miſſionaries will need neither.

The VAST EXTENT OF THE SAME LANGUAGE, is alſo an important article in our favour: through the immenſe field of theſe ſcattered iſlands the ſame language with little variation prevails; at leaſt the radical part is ſo much the ſame, that Tupia, who ſailed with Cooke, and died at Batavia, was always able to converſe with the natives at the different iſlands, at which they touched, and I think it was

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ſaid in one hiſtory, that the difference of dialects appeared no greater than exiſts in the ſeveral counties of ſo ſmall a country as England.

I ſhall ſuggeſt but one advantage more, among a multitude, that might be produced, that we ſhall here have no *falſe* Chriſtianity to oppoſe its life and ſpirit; and none I hope of thoſe diſputes, which among *real* Chriſtians, tend greatly to obſtruct the work of God. We have a field wholly uncultivated, but the ſoil is fit for ſeed, and the climate genial, and coming firſt, we have every thing in our favour, and may, without diſpute or oppoſition, inculcate the true knowledge of God our Saviour. From the king on the throne, to the infant of a year old, I ſhould not be ſurprized to ſee our ſchools thronged, and our worſhip attended. We know that he who made the heart can only renew it. We are ſure that the reſidue of the ſpirit is with him: and he hath promiſed to be with us always even to the end of the world. With ſuch divine encouragements what may we not hope for?

2. The means.

1. THE MISSIONARIES. This is generally ſuppoſed to be the great deſideratum, but I had confidence, and it is confirmed by every appearance, that we ſhall have ſuch a number offer, that the difficulty will be rather, whom we ſhall refuſe, than who ſhall be received. They will paſs the ordeal of men judged moſt capable of ſuch examination, taken from a body of miniſters and others, ſuch as this century hath, I think, never ſeen aſſociated, and thoſe ſelected for miſſionaries will aſſuredly be the choice of the flock, and bearing the genuine ſtamp of God upon them.

1. Reſpecting THEIR CONDITION. Whether the ſingle or married brethren ſhould be preferred, is to be matter of much conſideration. We ſeem hitherto to have preferred bachelors, but we wiſh alſo now to join married men, and their wives, if on further

further enquiries, white women will be found not to endanger the miſſion. I think they will greatly advance it.

2. Reſpecting *their ability*. It appears deſirable to have the beſt informed we can find. We hope to obtain ſome, who are not deſtitute of letters, and education, but the greater number we expect from the inferior claſſes of life. Men expert in their ſeveral profeſſions--who ſhall be found endued with good, or ſtrong natural parts--who have given evidence of their chriſtian walk and converſation for ſome conſiderable time paſt--atteſted by their miniſter, or ſome reſpectable members of the congregation, with which they have been in communion--who have diligently read their bibles--and are able to give a clear and ſatisfactory account of the great leading doctrines--and if they have been in the habit of exhorting--and appear apt to teach--their call will be the more evident: vital godlineſs is the firſt qualification we require--a meaſure of knowledge ſufficient to be uſeful in the way of teaching follows--this we hope alſo to improve--a clear devotedneſs of heart to the work--and a temper not haſty, but mild, patient, and conciliating, both to maintain undiſturbed union with their brethren, and to gain influence among the Heathen--theſe appear to be the deſirable miſſionary qualities, and will be found more at large in the diſcourſes delivered by the aſſociated brethren.

3. THE MODES OF CONVEYANCE. Theſe ſeem reducible to three.

1. A ſmall ſhip belonging to the ſociety, ſolely employed in the ſervice of the miſſion, to paſs to and fro, and to be employed in no traffic whatever, if her burden is ſmall, except the natural curioſities of the countries, and added to them, (a noble idea ſuggeſted by one of our brethren) their idols, now caſt to the moles, and to the bats. But probably from theſe things, the return would be inſignificant

cant and a heavy expence attach to the ſociety: though no more perhaps than can eaſily be borne.

Some kind of traffic even for a ſhip of ſmall tonnage alſo might be found, whether in conveying neceſſary ſupplies to port Jackſon, or bringing from ſome ports a cargo home, that might diminiſh the expence of ſuch a veſſel, and enable us to purſue the ſame track with other miſſionaries at no greater expence than we muſt incur, if we paid for their paſſage in a ſhip ſent to the ſouth ſea whale fiſhery.

2. A ſhip provided by others, either in or out of the miſſionary ſociety, of conſiderable ſize--500 tons, or upwards, to be engaged on contract. (1.) To government, to convey ſtores, or convicts to Port Jackſon, or Norfolk iſland. The unſpeakable advantages of which to government itſelf, and to the miſerable convicts are eaſily demonſtrable; and I am ready to attempt a memoir on this ſubject, wherein I might expoſe, to the fulleſt conviction, theſe advantages--with regard to the ſafety of conveyance--tender care of the convicts—with every neceſſary reſtraint—ſubmitted to with cheerfulneſs —from gratitude, that would tame a lion—and ſtrict diſcipline, that, whilſt it ſets an example of proper conduct, enſures the fidelity of the mariners themſelves againſt any cabals with the convicts,—and giving a moral certainty of the diſcovery of every plot which could be attempted—the probability that the care of the miſſionaries, as well as the conduct of the captain and crew would land the convicts better men than they found them—and if it pleaſes God to bleſs the miſſionaries labours to a few, if only to one, the benefit of that man, or woman to the colony and their fellows is incalculable; real chriſtianity will do more, than thoſe who have never known its true influence, can entertain any conception of; even an infidel muſt acknowledge the experiment is worth attempting;

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it can do no harm—it may do an immenſity of good to the nation itſelf.

From Port Jackſon, or Norfolk Iſland, the ſhip would ſail for Otaheite, only diſtant from the latter a fortnight or three weeks ſail—There land the miſſionaries and ſtay as long, as may be judged neceſſary to ſettle with the inhabitants an abode for the miſſion, and erect wooden or cane houſes for them. How long their ſtay, muſt be aſcertained on the ſpot, but the time to be fixed not to exceed a certain number of weeks, that the reſt of the voyage may be compleated. For this the miſſionary directors ſhall agree with the ſhip owners, according to the fair price due for ſuch conveyance, and demurrage, as may be fixed by any indifferent mercantile men in the city of London.

I cannot but obſerve of how aſtoniſhing a kind muſt be the arrival of ſuch a ſhip, and how conducive to the purpoſes of the miſſion. How rejoiced the iſlanders will be to find a body of men come to ſettle among them from England, purely to be a bleſſing to their country—to behold a captain and crew ſo far from contaminating them with their vices, ſetting an example of the moſt unimpeached purity, ſobriety, and temperance—reverencing the miſſionaries they bring—attending on daily worſhip, prayer, and praiſe—whether on ſhipboard, or on ſhore, and giving a happy ſpecimen of what is ſhewn before their eyes to be the effects of the truths which we come to bring to them, and the conduct we mean to purſue, and invite them to practiſe--I cannot enlarge on a ſubject that muſt ſtrike every man with its ſuitableneſs, and aſtoniſhingly promiſing conſequences.

From the ſociety iſlands, a continuance of the voyage may be made to Nootka Sound, for Peltry, --or a return immediate by China or Bengal, if the India company ſhall be pleaſed to indulge us with a freight of tea, or ſugar, the latter of which our captain,

captain, who has long reſided in Bengal, adviſes; and when proper application is made, we flatter ourſelves will not be refuſed. Thus the voyage may be compleated, if the Lord of winds and ſeas ſmile upon the attempt, in the courſe of a year and a half, and within a ſecond year a repetition of it made to maintain a communication with the miſſionaries,--increaſe their number,--and ſupply their wants.

Many have ſtarted at theſe ideas as Utopian, but they are not out of the leadings of Providence, or inconſiſtent with the reaſonable expectations of a wiſe and cool obſerver; indeed what ſeemed the hardeſt part is obviated in a moment, in a way that ſeems to manifeſt in a ſtriking view, the good hand of our God over us for good.

Where ſhall we find ſuch a captain? He is found. I am almoſt afraid to mention particulars, leaſt the adverſaries of our deſign ſhould malign it, as invention; but I may confidently ſay ſome of the moſt ſenſible, as well as moſt ſerious men of the kingdom have ſeen and converſed with him. He has allowed me to uſe his name, but in this ſtage of the buſineſs it may not be needful for the public, yet his kind and noble offers deſerve to be had in remembrance, and recorded for the approbation and imitation of times to come, when they may awaken ſimilar zeal and fidelity.

He was mentioned to me by one of my brethren to whoſe congregation he belongs, and it ſtruck me immediately that he was the very man calculated for the great work of conveying our miſſionaries to the place of their deſtination. I was informed he had been twenty years in India, had commanded a veſſel eleven years, had made a competent fortune, and returned to old England to enjoy it; there a gracious Lord found him, and brought him to the knowledge of that ſalvation, which is better than thouſands of gold and ſilver. His enjoyments

were

were now all heightened by a ſenſe of the divine favour, and a life ſpent in the love and ſervice of him whoſe preſence conſtitutes the bleſſedneſs of angels: on this ſubject I could enlarge, with delight. Suffice it to ſay, that after ſome years of uninterrupted enjoyment of the comforts around him; the Evangelical Magazine communicating ſome embrio views of a miſſion to the South Seas, fell into his hands. He was greatly ſtruck with the deſirableneſs and practicability of the attempt, and felt a ſuggeſtion riſing inſtantly in his mind, ſhould my help be needful for the execution of the deſign, am I willing to ſacrifice the comforts I enjoy, and without the proſpect of any addition to my fortune, which I neither ſeek nor want, once more to embark upon the ſtormy ocean?

A matter of this kind was ſo ſingular, that at firſt he heſitated, and he mentioned it, as a very remarkable circumſtance, though he had never in his life, during the whole time of his command, known what the ſenſation of fear was, he no ſooner began to feel this ſubject impreſſed on his mind, than an apprehenſion of the ſea came upon him that he had never known before; but the more he was led to conſider the ſubject, the more he felt his mind determined, if in the leadings of Providence he ſhould be called to the ſervice, that he could not refuſe. The miniſter, under whoſe labours he had received the happy views of redemption through the blood of the covenant, was one of thoſe engaged by his congregation, and neighbourhood, to attend the firſt meeting of the Miſſionary Society. He communicated to him what had paſſed in his own mind, and was invited by him, or offered (I forget which) to accompany him to London, and hear what was going forward. The ſight, the diſcourſes; the conferences held on the ſubject; all confirmed him, that the work was of God. He empowered the brother, his friend, to ſay to me, if

I can be of any ſervice in the execution of the plan, I dare not refuſe: I do indeed wiſh to be excuſed, and ſhall be unſpeakably happy, if you can find another more adequate for your purpoſe: I hope, ſuch a man may be found, and in that caſe, I truſt you will releaſe me from my engagement. We met, I reported to the general board our conferrence, and a committee was appointed to wait on him, to confer with him further on the ſubject. He very obligingly gave us the meeting, and in converſation confirmed all that he had before hinted, adding ſtill earneſtly, excuſe me if you can; none of you will rejoice ſo much as myſelf in finding a better man for your purpoſe, but if you cannot, here am I.—He gave us every information in his power, of the nature of the ſhip--ſize--expence --outfit, &c. and added, if I am called to your command, I ſhall have no objection to an intereſt in the veſſel. Let it be in ſhares, a ſhip's huſband appointed in town, and the gentlemen, that pleaſe, in the ſociety, or out of it, provide the funds as ſoon as the miſſionaries are found, and probably all difficulties will be more eaſily ſurmounted than at firſt was thought probable.

I may ſpeak with confidence, where my brethren are all ſo unanimous in opinion, that a man more highly qualified for the work could not be hoped, if we had the choice of the whole land. In all his manners, a gentleman,--a mein that is commanding,--an age, yet in the prime of vigour, with the maturity of experience,--and with all, an amiability of diffidence of offering himſelf, that ſeemed only conquerable by the calls of the miſſion, and the deep impreſſions reſting on his own heart. I confeſs, I have been ſo ſtruck with the circumſtance, and many other particulars, I could mention, that I know not where to cloſe; but one anecdote I muſt add. When in India, he was taken priſoner by Hyder Ally. He eſcaped from priſon

priſon--and in his flight, the vaſt Coleroon obſtructed his paſſage, he plunged into the waters, as no moment remained for deliberation, and ſwam to the other ſide, totally unacquainted with the dangers of that river: full of alligators, and never thus paſſed by human being, or the poſſibility of it ſuppoſed. Inſenſible of the danger he had eſcaped, he continued his flight, but was ſoon ſeized by Hyder's Peons, and carried priſoner to Seringapatam. The troops that had ſeized him, demanded how he had come thither, and he informed them of his flight, and that he had ſwam the Coleroon; in the rudeneſs of their dialect, (he repeated the words in their tongue, which I have forgotten,) they bluntly ſaid that muſt be a lie; no mortal had ever ſwam over that river, for if but the tip of a finger was dipped into it, an alligator ſnapped at it. His firm aſſurances ſtaggered them; they made farther enquiry--became convinced of the fact,--looked at him with wonder,--and a Turk cried out, this is *God's man*.

With him we hope, and have ſcarcely a doubt on the ſubject, that we ſhall find mates and mariners of a like mind, who will feel themſelves happy to trim the ſails, which waft the everlaſting goſpel to the ends of the earth. It is not now a hope too ſanguine to be realized, that we ſhall ſhortly ſee a veſſel on the boſom of the deep, ſuch as perhaps it hath never borne from the day of its creation, where every officer and mariner ſhall be men fearing God, and ſolemnly devoted to his work--where never a word, profane, impure, improper, ſhall be heard--where intemperance will be held in abhorrence, --and where, if the moſt delicious beverage were broached, averſion to intoxication would be a mightier reſtraint than the ſtrongeſt arm of authority,--where obedience will be ready as cheerful----where, with men of God ſtanding up in the midſt of them, the voice of prayer and

praiſe will be daily wafted to heaven--the bible open in the cabin, and on the quarter deck--and every leiſure hour devoted to ſpiritual improvement and religious exerciſes--unbelieving fear! Is any thing impoſſible with God? from ſuch a voyage, what bleſſings may not be expected?

But the expence of ſuch a veſſel with its apparatus is great: Admitted. But what a trifle to a thouſand commercial adventures that leave the ſhores of Britain, where the object will never come into competition reſpecting greatneſs, and even upon the very principles of advantage to the undertakers, no riſk could ever be leſs, all circumſtances conſidered, or more probable advantages ſecured. I am unwilling to enter into a detail of particulars, it is ſufficient to demonſtrate my fulleſt conviction of the truth, that I am willing heartily to embark in any part of the expence I can afford; the captain offers himſelf, as owner in one ſhare, a friend of mine, the moment he heard it, deſired me to ſay he was ready, if wanted, for another, and I doubt not the moment the propoſal is made, and the plan formed, the ſubſcription will be filled in a very few days, and the ſhip ready with all the ſpeed, that ſo great an undertaking admits. Indeed where the heart is ſo intereſted in the enterprize, every hand labours with his might to accompliſh it.

But there is yet another method equally practicable, which is the well known Southern Fiſhery, out of the track of which, our object lies no very conſiderable way. This may be tried, if we cannot get a freight from India, or even alone would, I am informed, alike effect our purpoſe, and cover the owners from loſs; or rather give them exactly the ſame career to run of profit and loſs, with thoſe already engaged in the trade, and with equal proſpects of advantages, beſides the additional one of conveying the Miſſion.

But

But ſhould there not be found ſufficient funds to procure ſo deſirable a mode of conveying the miſſionaries as I have propoſed, and which I hope, on many accounts, will be effected, it yet remains to enquire for ſome ſhip engaged in the Southern Fiſhery, who will contract to land the miſſionaries at their place of deſtination, with all the neceſſaries for their uſe, till we can ſend them a ſecond cargo. This I apprehend would be matter of no great difficulty, and except that many other great ends would be defeated, reſpecting the conveyance, it might effectually anſwer our purpoſe. I confeſs I ſhould hope every true friend to the cauſe of God and truth would vigorouſly exert themſelves in the execution of the nobler object, and I cannot but indulge the ſtrongeſt confidence, that God will abundantly bleſs us, and that what we thus lent to the Lord ſhould be paid us again with rich intereſt, even in this world; and in the world to come, be remembered among the works of faith, and labours of love, which will procure us a reward, beyond the preſent poſſeſſion of millions of gold and ſilver.

I have alſo to add, that exactly thus, but on a lower ſcale, do the Moravian Brethren maintain a communication with their Miſſion, on the Coaſt of Labradore, their ſhip is divided, I am told, into ſhares of ten pounds only. With the ſupply intended for the brethren, articles are ſent for traffic with the natives, enabling them to bring back cargoes that have afforded often, if not always, a dividend of more than the intereſt of the capital employed. And if we engaged in the Southern fiſhery, our returns would be ſimilar to theirs, blubber, whale-oil, ſeal-ſkins, &c. What others have done, why cannot we do, with equal wiſdom, diligence, and perſeverance? We have the ſame Lord to bleſs, and guide us, and looking up to him are emboldened to hope that he will ſtrengthen us with the right-hand of his righteouſneſs, and do exceeding

ceeding abundantly for us beyond all that we can aſk or think.

I have in ſome meaſure already anſwered the laſt queſtion, where 3dly *the funds* are to be found? Thoſe appropriated for the miſſion, are already formed, great, in three days, beyond the expectations or hopes, of the moſt ſanguine friends. It hath been aſtoniſhing as pleaſing to ſee the people offering willingly, eagerly, the gold and the ſilver, that the Lord's houſe might be built, and an enlargement of its foundations inſtantly be laid. Some thouſand pounds, I apprehend, are already lodged for preſent uſe; more than a thouſand annually ſubſcribed for. The zeal that hath been manifeſted when the work is but in embrio, gives the moſt confident expectations that nothing of this ſort will be wanting to carry it immediately into effect, and to ſupport it powerfully in its progreſs, multitudes probably are waiting, the reſult of our preſent meeting, who are ſtartled at the magnitude of the undertaking, and doubt of its practicability, whoſe hearts are as cordially engaged in it as our own, and will come forward with every help we can need or deſire. Men, (if men of ſuch importance are required) higher in the line of influence, wealth, and I may add, wiſdom, than ourſelves; whom the ſpirit of our God, if he pleaſes, will conſtrain, and turn their hearts towards the ſervice, as the rivers in the ſouth; with a body of wealth like their waters, and with force like theſe mighty ſtreams to bear down every, obſtacle in the way. Not that we depend on an arm of fleſh, whilſt we ſhall be happy to devolve the work on abler heads than our own. We know the ſtone hewn without hands from the mountain's ſide, can ſmite the image of jealouſy, which rears its hated front, and lay it low, even in the duſt.* We acknowledge the

* Dan. ii. 34.

work

work muſt be begun, continued, and ended, not by might nor by power, but by my ſpirit ſaith the Lord.

The gracious God haſten it in his time. *Amen,*

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P. S. Since this memoir was in ſubſtance delivered at Surry chapel, and afterwards compoſed for the preſs, the Directors have been led to call before them a perſon who ſailed with Captain Cooke, was two months at Otaheite, and able to talk with the natives ſufficiently to be underſtood; he has confirmed every tittle above advanced on the ſubject.

The beauty of the place, and every local advantage, though a plain man, he deſcribed in the moſt convincing manner; and as a proof how much it dwelt on his own mind, he aſſured us he would earneſtly have ſtaid behind, but the captain would not ſuffer it; and that the greateſt favour the ſociety could now do him, would be to-morrow to convey him and his wife and family to the Society Iſlands.

We queſtioned him about his wife's danger; he ſaid, no more, he thought, than here. The marriage ſtate was there equally reſpected; and they were as good wives and mothers, as in any other country.

He added, that chaſtity was not indeed held in the ſame eſtimation among the unmarried; but that women were not the tempters. Tha tthe rage for our iron overcame all reſtraint of honeſty or modeſty; but that no young man, he was fully ſure, would ever meet there any temptation, or ſolicitation from a woman, equal to thoſe he muſt paſs every day in the ſtreets of London.

As to danger or difficulties they are certainly leſs than I have repreſented them, rather than more; every miſſionary will have enough to try his faith and patience, when he quits his relations here, and goeth forth, he knoweth not whither: But I

ſee

ſee no uſe in raiſing terrific ideas, as if we muſt make what we do not find. There is but one ſolid queſtion. What is the truth? To pretend dangers, that do not exiſt, would be to depart from the ſimplicity of truth, and to do evil that good may come.

As the ſociety proceeds in the execution of the plan it hath formed, the public will be acquainted with the particulars.

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Such gentlemen and ladies who are diſpoſed to favour this undertaking by preſent donations, or annual ſubſcriptions, may forward them to the Treaſurer, or any of the directors, to either of the ſecretaries, or to the following banking-houſes: Meſſrs. Down, Thornton, and Co.; Hankey, and Co.; Welch, Rogers, and Co.; and Fuller, Son, and Co.; Birch, Chambers, and Hobbs, No. 152 Bond Street.

Should they be inclined to remember the inſtitution in their Will, the following is A PROPER FORM OF A DONATION TO THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY BY WILL.

*Item*, I A. B. do hereby give and bequeath the ſum of unto the Treaſurer, for the time being, of a voluntary ſociety, commonly called, or known by the name of, THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY, eſtabliſhed in London, in the year 1795; the ſame to be paid within months next after my deceaſe, out of my perſonal eſtate, in truſt, to be applied to the uſes and purpoſes of that ſociety.

FINIS.